

GENERAL

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R. MacGowan



The AVALON HILL

GENERAL

The Game Players Magazine

The Avalon Hill GENERAL is dedicated to the presentation of authoritative articles on the strategy, tactics, and variation of Avalon Hill wargames. Historical articles are included only inasmuch as they provide useful background information on current Avalon Hill titles. The GENERAL is published by the Avalon Hill Game Company solely for the cultural edification of the serious game aficionado, in the hopes of improving the game owner's proficiency of play and providing services not otherwise available to the Avalon Hill game buff. Avalon Hill is a division of Monarch Avalon Industries, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Monarch Avalon, Inc. The shares of Monarch Avalon, Inc. are publicly traded on the NASDAQ System under the symbol MAHI. For information about the company write to Harold Cohen at the executive offices of the company, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214.

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Avalon Hill Philosophy Part 103

Back in the AH Philosophy of Vol. 20, No. 3, the designer/developers of Avalon Hill reviewed the progress of their current projects. Since that time, Avalon Hill has added two designers well known for their meticulous attention to detail and playability. It seemed advisable to give the readership a preview of their efforts over the coming year. With no further ado . . .

S. Craig Taylor, Jr.:

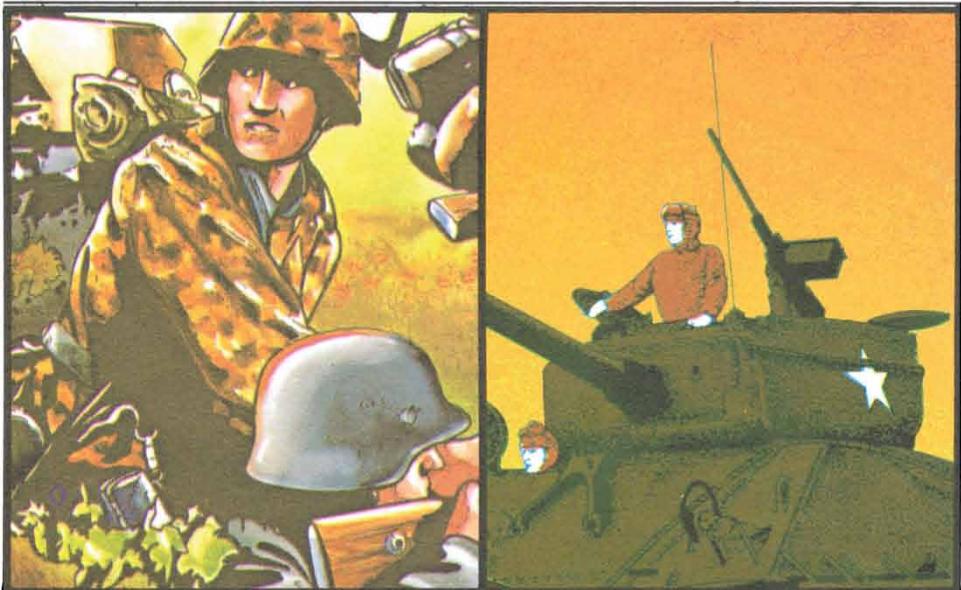
While still trying to get my feet wet here, Shaw and Greenwood immersed me up to my ears. FIREPOWER should be out by the time this column appears, and when the glazed look fades from my eyes, new projects should come from the following list (given in approximately the order of prob-

ability of being published)—

STURMOVIEK

Air buff Michael Anchors has reformatted the original *AIR FORCE/DAUNTLESS Expansion Kit* data cards, added some new rules and plane types, included the errata from the *AIR FORCE* and *DAUNTLESS* games, and generally left a project that needs only to be pushed through production (which should be done this fall). The kit will not be divided into two gamettes, as previously planned, but will be kept intact (with 60 data cards) to make *STURMOVIEK* the third and final installment in the *AIR FORCE* series.

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DISCUS (7th EVENT)

DECATHLON

SHOT PUT (3rd EVENT)

61'9"	61'6"	61'3"	61'	60'9"	60'6"	60'3"	60'
59'9"	59'6"	59'3"	59'	58'9"	58'6"	58'3"	58'
57'9"	57'6"	57'3"	57'	56'9"	56'6"	56'3"	56'
55'9"	55'6"	55'3"	55'	54'9"	54'6"	54'3"	54'
53'9"	53'6"	53'3"	53'	52'9"	52'6"	52'3"	52'
51'9"	51'6"	51'3"	51'	50'9"	50'6"	50'3"	50'
49'9"	49'6"	49'3"	49'	48'9"	48'6"	48'3"	48'
47'9"	47'6"	47'3"	47'	46'9"	46'6"	46'3"	46'
45'9"	45'6"	45'3"	45'	44'9"	44'6"	44'3"	44'
43'9"	43'6"	43'3"	43'	42'9"	42'6"	42'3"	42'
41'9"	41'6"	41'3"	41'	40'9"	40'6"	40'3"	40'

FOUL 1 FOUL 2



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BANZAI expands upon 1983's most innovative and acclaimed game system to bring the steaming jungles of the SouthWest Pacific to your gaming table. The mystique, incredible courage, and tragic flaws of the Japanese soldier are vividly portrayed in the tense, exciting games of simulated man-to-man combat which only *UP FRONT* presents in such panoramic splendor.

Owners of *UP FRONT* will find the game system extensions included herein to be the ultimate in simplicity and convenience while adding rich detail to the portrayal of the Japanese and British nationalities as well as accounting for American marines. Twelve new scenarios depict not only typical SW Pacific encounters, but allow more variations for *UP FRONT*'s existing European scenarios as the British take on the Germans, or the Russians test the Japanese in Manchuria. Several new scenario types list European variations, thus expanding the scope of *UP FRONT*'s possible encounters. And, of course, the complicated TO&E and capabilities of the new nationalities have been distilled into the eminently playable Personnel cards of the *UP FRONT* game system.

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BANZAI is available now for \$12.00 from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214). Note, ownership of *UP FRONT* is a prerequisite to play this game. Please add 10% to all orders for postage and handling (20% for Canadian orders, 30% for overseas). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

#1 SGT OKIMOTO CCV:11/5 SL
Bolt-Action Rifle: X6



Arisaka Meiji 38

Range	Firepower
0	0
1	0
2	1
3	2
4	2
5	3

MORALE:6 PT:45 KIA:8

#3 PFC SCARBOROUGH CCV:5/4
Light Machinegun: X6



Bren

Range	Firepower
0	2
1	3
2	4
3	5
4	6
5	6

MORALE:4 PT:61 KIA:8

#5 PVT HODGE
Bolt-Action Rifle:



Lee Enfield Mark I

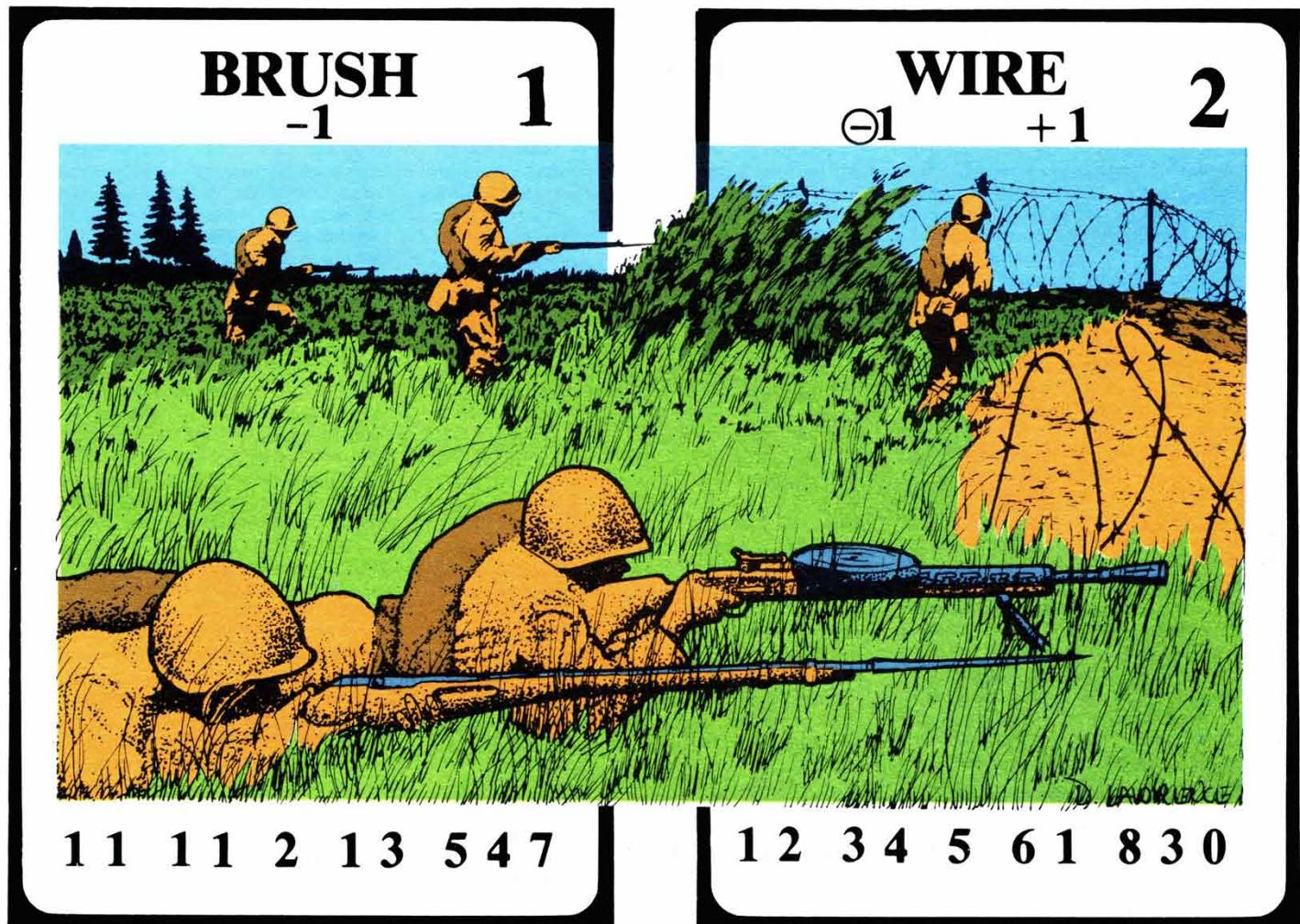
Range	Firepower
0	0
1	1
2	1
3	2
4	2
5	3

MORALE:4 PT:20 KIA:8

PLAYING YOUR CARDS UPFRONT

An Old Fashioned Card Playing Lesson

By Don Greenwood



Authoring "How to Win" articles for war game periodicals seemingly became unfashionable over a decade ago—the practice being derisively referred to as advocacy of "perfect plans". Perfect plans were no such thing of course. Wargames contain too many variables to be dismissed with a single course of action. Indeed, if a perfect plan did exist for one, it merely revealed a flawed product. The poorly developed wargame for which a single perfect strategy exists is not a game, but rather a puzzle which loses its value and allure with the discovery of the solution. Fortunately, *UP FRONT* labors under no such burden. During my 25 years in the hobby, I've never come across a game that more epitomizes my conception of what the perfect wargame should be. Indeed, after 12 years of game development, this is the first time I have been able to look back on one of my finished products with absolutely no remorse about what "should have been." Aside from the usual typos and proof-reading gliches, I am at a loss to describe how the game could have conceptually been any better. The second edition changes found elsewhere in this issue address only cosmetic errors, or clarifications to rare happenstance. Never have I seen a game blend such large doses of realism and playability into so successful a marriage. The lessons of squad level combat have never been so graphically displayed, nor the "Fog of War" been represented as effectively or effortlessly. In short, those readers who

have grown over the years to share my taste in games, simply must have *UP FRONT*. It is, in my opinion, without parallel . . . either as a game or as a simulation. And now, with the commercial out of the way, let's see what we can do about playing your hand in *UP FRONT*.

CARD COUNTING FOR FUN AND PROFIT

Like all card games, you can't claim to play *UP FRONT* with any great degree of skill unless you count cards at some level. Critics of the game may be quick to dismiss it as a game of chance and declare their preference for games of "skill". Freely translated, this means they can't count cards and prefer to play a game with 30+ pages of rules that they have read more recently and/or frequently than you. They will then proceed to demonstrate their "skill" by repeating the opening move they have memorized with great care during their last ten games and/or display their seemingly telekinetic control of the dice. On the other hand, veteran card players will hasten to defend card games as the ultimate test of skill kept constantly fresh by the ever changing fortunes of the draw. No *Hearts* or *Pinochle* player worth his salt will ever dismiss his game as one of chance, but that's because they count cards, and thereby transform their game into one of skill sweetened by the uncertainties of chance.

Very few games fall into the strictly skill category. Chess, *DIPLOMACY*, Dominoes, and Tiddlywinks are all that come readily to mind, and I gave them all up as boring years ago. I crave a game tinged with the uncertainties of chance that my skill can overcome. I doubt whether a Grand Master gets much of a charge dispatching a novice Chess player in three moves, but the greatest *FOOTBALL STRATEGY* player in the world can be challenged and upset by a rank beginner even though he will probably win 15 out of 16 subsequent games. And so it is on the battlefield. A firefight may be many things, but it is never boring. Just ask anyone unfortunate enough to have been in one. I guarantee that boredom will not be among the emotions listed. The better armed, more experienced, or more numerous participants may have an advantage and be expected to prevail; but such results are by no means pre-ordained. Such is the role of fate on the battlefield. Should luck play any lesser role in our simulation? Assuming now that we've accepted the advisability of having a chance element in a wargame, let's turn our attention to how a good player can harness the luck element to his own advantage.

Card counting in *UP FRONT* is far different from the variety practised in more conventional card games. A *Blackjack* player trying to beat a casino has only ten denominations of cards to observe and each of those is in equal proportions to

the others (except for the ten-count cards which, when taken as a group, are four times as plentiful as the rest). The Blackjack player then has a relatively simple matter assigning a -1 value to all ten-count cards and a +1 value to the four lowest cards (2 to 5) to enable him to keep a running tally as to the relative value of the remainder of the deck—be it positive or negative. Armed with this information, the card counter can make increasingly educated decisions on the play of his cards and the size of his wagers as the deck dwindles down to the reshuffle point. While far from guaranteeing his success, the accomplished card counter who adheres to a sound basic strategy and employs good money management techniques has managed to reverse the basic odds of Blackjack from a 53% house advantage to a nearly equal factor in his favor. Over the long haul, the player should prevail while the casino makes a killing on those who prefer to play games of chance. Counting cards in *UP FRONT* is not as easy, but has far more levels of useful applications—including a few which are guaranteed.

Before proceeding further, I should perhaps clarify the amount of effort required (or desired) for card counting. I do not advocate standing by with calculator or pad and pencil in hand to analyze the fall of every card. Such boorishness detracts from the enjoyment of what is, essentially, a lightning-quick game. Just as the firefight bursts it simulates are measured in seconds, so should the player's reactions be quick and decisive. Between experienced players, even games which are ended by time limit should not exceed an hour in length, and those which come to a rapid conclusion can be over in ten minutes. For example, a recent playtest session of the new Japanese and British cards consisted of a one hour stint at the airport with the designer while waiting for his plane. Three patrols later, having played each scenario to a conclusion, we were still waiting for his plane. Naturally then, card counting should not go to any limits beyond that which can be rapidly assimilated, assessed, and used naturally by the player during the course of normal observation and play.

However, *UP FRONT* as a hybrid is more than just a card game. Based on board game principles, there are far more variables involved than even the highly varied 162 card deck presents. Nationality differences, varying scenario victory conditions, and the constantly changing situation on the "board" all serve to increase the game's decision points, and influence the play of the cards far more than the interaction of the cards in the player's hand would dictate in a conventional card game. The game is still won or lost on the board; the cards are just the mechanic which resolves the action on the board. Keeping a running tally on the positive/negative content of the deck's RNCs in the Blackjack sense is not a very worthwhile application of card counting principles in *UP FRONT*. Due to the pressures imposed on a player's card hand by the ongoing drama on the board, a player could rarely afford to pass up a fire attack because of a negative card count and in most cases would be foolish to disrupt his play by doing so. There are more practical and far easier applications of card counting for this game. So what do we count . . .

OVER THE RIVER AND THROUGH THE WOODS

No player can afford not to keep track of the two Stream and three Wire cards, or the two Minefield cards if they are active. These are the only cards which can not only stop an advance, but can ultimately cut the moving group to shreds. Players will frequently have to move without the peace of mind that this knowledge can generate; the player who does so at close range without a spare movement card is taking a monumental risk which should be chanced under only the most dire cir-

cumstances. The player who can account for the whereabouts of these five cards can move more quickly to seize opportunity when it appears because he need not wait for a back-up movement card, or if he has one can discard it in search of a more useful Rally or Fire card as the situation warrants. As in real life, quick movement is rewarded. The longer one waits to prepare his move for the advance to the next range marker, the longer the opponent has to prepare a reception by filtering cards through his hand in search of Stream, Wire, or Marsh delay cards or high Fire cards usable at the next Relative Range. There is not much to be gained by counting the other terrain cards as most players will not move without one in hand to move into anyway. Even the Russians and Japanese, played with a four card hand, will move into the unknown at close proximity to the enemy only with great cause or for great reward.

The only other practical application of card counting in *UP FRONT*, for most players, is to keep track of the extreme value RNCs. Every player should be able to keep inventory of the three red 6's in each deck which result in weapon malfunctions. While a player cannot be afraid to fire for fear of a weapon breakdown, the knowledge of how many potential breakdowns are still awaiting him in that deck should be available to use in assessing the many marginal decisions which will occur where the player is undecided as to whether he should fire, entrench, move, or discard. As the deck grows smaller and smaller, a player who has yet to note a red 6 becomes more and more reluctant to fire—perhaps to the point of refusing an attack and waiting for the new deck—only to reach the bottom of the deck and discover that the red 6's were slipped by him in the form of his opponent's discards. Players with ordnance weapons should extend this watch to the five red 5's. An extremely good card counter with a bazooka or panzerschreck to worry about might even consider keeping tally on the eight red 4's as well.

Naturally, if a player is going to keep track of the high red numbers, it doesn't take much more effort to keep track of the high black RNCs. A player who knows that the three black 6's have been dispensed with won't be tempted to play a Concealed card he'd rather keep on a 2 strength attack to guarantee that none of his men will receive a KIA. Or conversely, a player with a Sniper card may be inclined to hold it for the next deck if he knows the high count cards have already been used. Or, to cite another example, an attacker who is running out of time to accomplish his Victory Conditions may wish to abandon a low Fire Strength attack which his opponent has reduced with a Concealed card if he knows the majority of the high RNCs have been accounted for and his attack has no hope of pinning an enemy. Naturally, the more categories a player can count, the greater application he can make of his intelligence. A player whose memory can handle still more categories can benefit most by keeping a tally of Rally and Movement cards so that he can give appropriate weight to each in his discard decisions when that inevitable time comes when he has to cast off something he can use in hopes of getting something he needs more.

BUILDING A HAND

As in most card games, not all cards are created equal. Some have more intrinsic worth than others, but each can be extremely valuable given the right circumstances. Obviously, the most valuable cards are those which retain their usefulness in the most circumstances—but ultimately a card's value is dependent on the player's need for those services at any given time. Unlike *Poker* in which a Royal Flush always wins the pot, the player's hand in *UP FRONT* is constantly evolving. Cards are continually being used or discarded and replaced by

others. No single card is of value if it consumes a place in the hand and thereby prevents the player from drawing a card for which the demands of the moment dictate a greater need. Cards therefore derive their true worth by their collective value in the player's hand. They must compliment each other to form a balanced blend of all the individual capabilities the game allows so that the player can react to any situation. The object is to win the game on the board by achieving the scenario victory conditions; one moves toward these objectives by keeping as balanced a hand as possible. A hand composed solely of the best Rally cards in the game is a poor hand because ultimately most of those Rally cards must be discarded in order to attempt anything else. The ideal balanced hand varies with the nationality, victory conditions, time frame of the scenario, and general situation but almost always contains a Rally, Fire, Terrain, and Movement card. When distilled to its simplest terms, good game play consists of those actions which discomfit the enemy or improve your own situation on the board while seeking at the same time to build a balanced hand. However, the requirements of the moment as dictated by the situation on the board will constantly make demands on the hand and knock it out of balance. Efficient play then requires that the player filter cards through his hand as quickly as possible in an effort to reduce the imbalance while at the same time performing as many actions on the board as possible to maintain pressure on the opponent. When the situation reaches crisis proportions, the flow of cards through the hand must be maximized in hopes of drawing the needed card even if it means discarding otherwise valuable cards, ignoring possible actions, or taking dangerous ones. The decisions a player makes in maintaining the flow of cards through his hand are the ultimate determinants under his control in whether he will win or lose. Unlike card games, the criteria by which each player makes these decisions vary due to the different restraints placed on his hand by the nationality rules. *Viva la difference.*

To keep the size of this article to manageable levels, we'll limit our analysis of the different nationality card hands for the most part to its application to the basic line squad in the *Patrol* scenario. Analysis of elite or second line troops, special weapons, and other scenarios is left to more ambitious authors at a later date. Each nationality section is preceded by a summation of the six types of usable Action cards for that nationality. The presence of Split Action cards usable only by certain nationalities makes each nationality inherently stronger or weaker in those categories beyond the numerical limitations of the size of its card hand. Each figure is given as the actual number of such cards with a percentage of the maximum number of such cards available in the game provided after the slash "/" marks. The number in parens following the Rally and Concealed figures represents the total capacity of the available cards. The two Hero cards are excluded from both calculations. Three scenario-defined Cower cards are added to each nationality's figure for the *Patrol* scenario. Players should keep in mind that the number of scenario-defined Cower cards varies widely from one scenario to the next—ranging from a low of 5 for Scenario J to a high of 13 for the attacker in Scenario I. The Cower card figures do not include cards to be removed from the deck on their first discard, although they too are technically "Cower" cards.



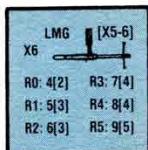
THE AMERICANS:

SMOKE: 5/100%
MOVEMENT: 24/80%
CONCEALMENT: 13 (20)/60% (71%)
RALLY: 21 (62)/91% (97%)
RADIO: 8/100% COWER 10/100%
MEN: 12 MORALE: 2.8 PANIC 4.3

The American has the luxury of a six-card hand, but can discard only two cards per turn and only if he takes no action during that turn. His advantage should be obvious . . . with a six-card hand he has the luxury of planning his moves to an extent far greater than any other nationality. He can stockpile the four principle components of a balanced hand (Rally, Fire, Move, and Terrain) while still discarding two cards per turn attempting to better his hand. These strengths are counterbalanced by the lowest Morale and Movement and the highest Cower capacity in the game. The net result is that the American should give extra weight to Movement and Concealment cards when discard time comes around.

The combination of his low morale and extra storage capacity should mean that the American never advances to Relative Range 2 or closer without a good terrain card already in hand to move into and an extra Movement card (preferably a Ford) in reserve to move quickly off of any suddenly appearing stream or wire obstacle. Conversely, his extra storage capacity allows an American to hold onto a Stream, or even a Marsh card, for an entire deck or more waiting for the opportunity to decimate a moving group. It takes courage (or foolhardiness) to advance against an American without either a Ford-Movement card in reserve or knowledge that the Stream cards have already been spent. Naturally, the deeper into the deck you delve, the more likely your American opponent is situated beyond a hidden stream. Therefore, the earliest moves are the safest.

The combination of his morale and movement capacity means that the American will seldom win the Patrol scenario by boldly moving into range chit 4. In any game that goes to the time limit, the American can expect 18 less Movement cards than any Japanese opponent and nine less than a German. Consequently, the American should think twice about strategies requiring him to do the lion's share of movement.



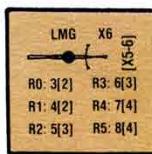
THE GERMANS:

SMOKE: 5/40%
MOVEMENT: 27/90%
CONCEALMENT: 14 (22)/74% (79%)
RALLY: 23 (64)/100% (100%)
RADIO: 6/75% COWER 7/70%
MEN: 10 MORALE: 3.2 PANIC 3.9

The German five-card hand is generally believed to be the best in the game because it is the only hand of any line troops that allows a discard in the same turn as an action. The advantage is a strong one and more than makes up for the extra card advantage of the GI. The German is never tormented by a decision to either fire or discard, because he can always discard regardless of his actions. The German, alone of all the combatants, can add insult to injury by firing on a moving group and then dropping a Wire, Marsh, or Stream card on an already pinned group in the same turn. Every other player must decide between firing at a choice moving target or delaying them with a discard. The German can have his cake and eat it too. It is a tremendous advantage.

However, the German hand is not without its drawbacks. With a maximum discard capability of only one card per turn, the German player is in big trouble if he gets himself into a spot where he is unable to perform any action because he depends on his capability to use the cards in his hand to maximize the flow of cards. A German whose only groups are pinned and whose hand consists of Movement, Terrain, Cower, and unusable Fire cards is in difficulties, because he can draw only one card per turn in an effort to find the Rally or Concealment cards he desperately needs. Therefore, the German must be more alert to the need for a balanced hand than anyone. The German is the most difficult to back into a hole, but once there his chances of escaping unscathed are equally poor. The German who holds onto a Stream card and several high Fire cards in anticipation of an Allied advance which never comes is in big trouble if he is run out of Rally cards by an opponent who attacks him in place.

The German's strong suit is his Rally capacity. If anyone can afford to turn his back on a Rally 1 card in hopes of drawing a better one, it's him. The German also has a strong incentive to save delay cards due to the double whammy enticement of his dual fire/discard capability.



THE RUSSIAN:

SMOKE: 0/0%
MOVEMENT: 30/100%
CONCEALMENT: 19 (28)/100% (100%)
RALLY: 19 (54)/83% (84%)
RADIO: 4/50% COWER 7/70%
MEN: 15 MORALE: 3.3 PANIC 3.9

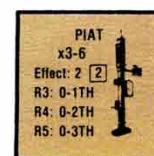
The Russian hand capacity of four cards is much maligned—and not without good reason. A four-card hand makes maintenance of a balanced hand or planned moves extremely difficult. The Russian almost has to depend on the vagaries of chance to bring him the cards he needs. He often has to move without a terrain card in hand and must trust to luck to bring him one in his next draw. Fortunately for the Russian, he has other advantages which nullify his small hand capacity to a large extent. Even so, few new players opt to play the Russians, preferring instead to play the more larger and comfortable hand of the Americans. This is understandable; a four-card hand is not very reassuring, and until one plays with all the rules (including entrenchments which are introduced late in the Programmed Instruction format) the Russians do seem to get the short end of the stick.

However, all is not lost. The Russians can discard their entire hand if they take no action and need not count entrenchment attempts as full-fledged actions. Consequently, while the Russian is the most likely player to be short the card he needs, he will probably be without it for the shortest duration. And while the Russian can least afford to save terrain to move into, he has maximum use of Movement and Concealment cards to reduce this disadvantage. If the Russian can discard his entire hand, the odds are that he should be able to draw at least one Terrain or Concealment card for use next turn. Moreover, the Russian manpower advantage allows them to take a rather callous attitude towards casualties. A Russian short of Rally cards will seldom feel any need to stop an advance for a pinned man, especially a low morale one—and can afford to write him off in favor of a continued advance. His superior numbers should enable him to set up more groups and thereby take greater advantage of flanking fire and flanking movements. Once

the Russian closes the range, his numerical advantage, morale, and berserk status will give him the upperhand. Lastly, the Russian player should be cognizant of the existance of the two dual-action cards which he may play either as Movement or Concealment. While these cards are in his hand, his hand capacity is effectively increased to five cards and he should endeavor to keep them as long as possible.

On the negative side, however, the Russian suffers from a grievous lack of Rally cards and despite his lack of storage capacity can scarcely afford to ever discard one. Pity the poor Russian dealt three high Rally cards who knows he cannot afford to hold them all, nor can he afford to throw any away for he surely will have need of them eventually. Top that off with abysmal firepower until he closes the range, and the Russian has a hard time of it in the early going of most encounters.

(Being a developer has its advantages—including access to the, as yet unreleased, *BANZAI, UP FRONT Expansion Kit*. Those of you who thought I had nothing new to tell you are about to be surprised.)



THE BRITISH:

SMOKE: 5/100%
MOVEMENT: 27/90%
CONCEALMENT: 14 (22)/74% (79%)
RALLY: 23 (64)/100% (100%)
RADIO: 6/75% COWER 5/50%
MEN: 10 MORALE: 3.1 PANIC 4.1

The British five-card hand is a blend of both the German and American. It shares the American two-card discard capability during any turn in which no action is performed and is able to use both American and German Split Action card capabilities. This gives it one-dual action card (#158) usable as either Movement or Smoke and the smallest Cower card count in the game. Despite this, the British hand would still be decidedly second rate to either the German or American were it not for a special firepower bonus rule. In recognition of the British renown for calmness under fire and special emphasis on marksmanship training, the British may deduct one firepower factor requirement from any attack they make (down to a minimum of one firepower). This firepower bonus can be used more than once per turn and may be switched from group to group, which means its incidence of use is far greater than one would expect. The addition of this single firepower factor makes British fire among the most effective in the game, and makes the British especially deadly adherents of the *Cross Fire* attack technique.



THE JAPANESE:

SMOKE: 0/0%
MOVEMENT: 30/100%
CONCEALMENT: 19 (28)/100% (100%)
RALLY: 19 (54)/83% (84%)
RADIO: 4/50% COWER 7/70%*
MEN: 13 MORALE: 3.6 PANIC 3.6

The Japanese are perhaps the most interesting nationality in the game—which is saying a lot for a

four-card hand and a two-card maximum discard during any turn in which no action is taken. Without even the capacity to throw in their entire hand, one is tempted to dismiss them as a poor cousin to the Russians (whose Split Action cards they must use). However, the Japanese, like the British, benefit from special rules which more than compensates them for the worst hand capacity in the game.

The Japanese squad does not break until it suffers 75% losses (compared to the 51% losses of non-Asiatic forces). This is a tremendous advantage in any game approaching even attrition. Furthermore, the Japanese player is allowed free discard of any Cower card regardless of actions performed or other cards discarded so that the Japanese player will never be struck with the same worthless card two turns in a row. The Japanese player can play Movement cards without hindering his discard capability and thereby greatly increases the flow of cards through his hand. Most importantly, the Japanese overcomes in part his poor Rally capacity with a *Banzai* rule which allows him to rally pinned men without use of a Rally card by declaring an all-out charge on an opposing group. *Banzai* attacks are not to be taken lightly as they greatly increase the charging group's vulnerability, but as a last resort they can be a devastating tactic.

All of these special capabilities coupled with the highest morale, movement, and concealment concentrations in the game make the Japanese a very viable force despite the lowest firepower and Panic values in the game. The Japanese are the hardest to pin, but the easiest to kill, and consequently the most mobile force in the game. The Japanese squad is built for maneuver and without movement cards it will wither on the vine. Nearly every workable Japanese strategy involves closing the range to Relative Range 3 as quickly as possible, and as such, its play is not far removed from that of the other four-card hand—the Russians.

FORMING GROUPS

In perusing the initial reviews of this game, the only consistent criticism that I've observed has been a stated fear that the game may grow stale quickly due to the limitations of what you can do with a maximum of four groups to a side. The theory of these novice players has been that they will discover the perfect way to play every scenario (i.e., that they will decide what group sizes constitute the most efficient use of a side's resources and that by applying that formula to every game) and that play will eventually evolve to stereotyped luck of the draw. Balderdash! I believe in making my own luck! After virtually hundreds of playings, I have yet to encounter two alike and each has presented me with a myriad of decisions to make which tantalized me with the knowledge that my decisions did make a difference and were based on facts, yet confounded me by denying me a perfect solution. Furthermore, what seems to work in one scenario is often foolish in the next. While the tactics of the game remain largely the same, the strategy varies a great deal from one scenario to the next. I've also run into numerous players who maintain that one side or the other can't possibly win. I then either beat them myself or introduce them to someone with exactly the opposite theory. All of this brings us full circle to my opening arguments—there is no perfect plan for *UP FRONT*, only knowledge based on solid analysis which can aid you in your trek through its adventures. So, as a final exercise, let's examine what I believe to be the optimum opening group compositions for a Meeting of Patrols.

GERMAN: The German bears the burden of initial set up which is only partially compensated by the first move and placement of the first terrain card. The latter can be a considerable advantage, but only when a Marsh or Stream card is available; thus the

burden of initial set up is usually just that because it always confers on the opponent the ability to react to the initial display of German intentions while he still has freedom to deploy his own groups. The weakest, or least numerous, group is always Group A since A's freedom of lateral maneuver is abstractly restricted by the "board's" edge. If it became necessary for Group A to move laterally to block an opposing Group B or C, it would be restricted not only by the lateral distance involved, but also by the presence of its own Group B blocking the way. Furthermore, Group A is "adjacent" to only two groups while Group B is adjacent to three. Thus, the player who deploys first must always set up his power base in the middle for the maximum flexibility of fire and movement to both left and right. Obviously, the SL and ASL must be in separate groups to maximize use of potential Smoke cover.

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With but ten men in the German squad, I've found it necessary to make do with only two groups, usually resorting to a six-man fire base and a four-man maneuver group. Against the Russians, I've found the 4+6 combination to be the most flexible in terms of providing both a substantial fire base (9 FP at RR 1) and a maneuver group capable of winning by reaching range chit 4 with four men. The fire base includes the LMG in position 6 and the ASL in position 5 as the assistant crewman. Obviously, a dependable man is needed as the ass't gunner, and the ASL is among the most dependable available and his Machine Pistol is of little value before the action closes to Relative Range 4. Once RR 4 is reached, the highest morale rifleman available should switch to crew the LMG during any lull which presents itself. Otherwise, Hessel can abandon his assistant crewman duties at RR 5 if the need presents itself. The SL and the three best riflemen form the maneuver group because they are the most likely to close to RR 5 with the Russians and are better able to withstand Close Combat and the added danger of extra movement. Should the SL lead the fire group, he should occupy the sixth position rather than the LMG.

Against an American squads' long range FP, however, I've found the German fire base to be too fragile and prefer to use the three best riflemen in the fire base and the three weakest in the maneuver group. The latter tends to move under only optimal conditions and generally stays close to the fire base for possible individual transfers unless the Americans have been badly pinned. The SL remains with the lesser group because the fire base is the more likely group to be placed in harm's way on a hilltop while the maneuver group may well take cover in a Gully. A pinned SL is to be avoided at all times.

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Many players prefer to put their faith in the biggest fire base which the rules and their resources will allow, which in this case means an eight-man fire group and a two man throw away. I've never cared much for this approach as it smacks too much of putting all your eggs in one basket. Large groups insure maximum use of Fire cards and the most efficient use of large Rally cards and Concealment cards, but have several disadvantages including a lack of flexibility. A large group can throw a lot of lead, but it also attracts a lot. The larger the group, the more targets an opponent gets for every Fire Strength point he can deliver. This, in turn, means that a large group spends a lot of its time with at least one man pinned and is therefore hard to move and very vulnerable to Wire, Marsh, and Stream cards. Just as important, is the weakness of the two-man group which has but a single FP at RR 1 and whose use for Cross Fire attacks is consequently much restricted. More importantly, if this group gets into trouble it is easily wiped out and is a prime target for Cross Fire or Sniper attacks when either

or both men are pinned. The consequences of such a loss are far more meaningful than the loss of two men. The opponent derives an immediate increase in his card hand capacity due to your being reduced to one group. Moreover, the German, restricted to a one card discard capability, can easily generate a poor hand because he is now reduced to a maximum of one action per turn and the performance of actions is the main German method of maintaining card flow through his hand. Although I don't care for this set up, different opponents exhibit different tendencies and I will use it occasionally, if only to try something different. When I do, however, the throwaway group is always composed of the SL and the least valuable rifleman. The SL goes here both because he is less likely to be pinned with the non-target group, and he is the most likely to survive a fire attack. The major function of this group is simply to survive. Unfortunately, such a deployment increases the SL's vulnerability to Sniper attack. Consequently, the German should give extra weight to Sniper Check decisions when using this deployment.

RUSSIAN: The basis of Russian strategy is usually how to get to RR 2 as quickly and with as few losses as possible so as to be able to start trading shots with the German instead of practising his javelin-catching act. I have found that the most effective means of doing this is to try to win the game with an End Run to the Victory Conditions.

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Basically, this consists of the two weakest riflemen in A, a fire base in B consisting of the LMG and from four to six of the mediocre riflemen, another minimum group in C composed of the two riflemen with a morale of 2, and four to six of the best riflemen in D. The SL should not be used to crew the LMG; his semi-automatic rifle being slightly more valuable should the group have to fire while on the move. Group A will probably never move nor fire—it's sole purpose is to allow Flanking Fire on the German A Group by the fire group should the opportunity present itself. The Fire group's job is to put whatever firepower it can manage into German Group B to prevent it from interfering with the maneuver group. Naturally, with only 3 FP at RR 0 and 4 FP at RR 1, its ability to throw lead is limited to the 14 weakest Fire cards—a performance even the presence of a Hero card will not improve. Therefore, the Fire Group should advance whenever possible in an effort to reach RR 2. Although the highest priority for Movement cards must be reserved for the Maneuver group, there will be times when the two can move together or the Fire group should have priority. For example, if the only terrain card in hand is a Hill, the fire group should move forward—whereas if a Gully is available, the maneuver group makes the jump. Less obvious, would be the availability of a Fire card usable at the next range, or perhaps the pinned or weapon malfunction status of the other group. Group C likewise exists only to allow Flanking Fire on a German Group C and to allow the maneuver group to start at the extreme right of the field. If circumstances allow, Group C should attempt to move parallel to the fire group to allow for the possibility of an Individual Transfer. Group D's task is to charge forward to Range Chit 4 as fast as possible and claim victory. If Movement and terrain cards are quick in coming, the game can be over in moments; if not, the threat of such discomfits the German and hampers his flexibility more than any other plan I've seen. The advantage of this set up is that the Russian maneuver group is not adjacent to the Germans and therefore the RR of any fire on it is reduced by one until the German makes a Lateral Group transfer to C. If the Russian gets the first Movement cards, he can be at Range Chit 2 before the German can muster more than four firepower factors to use against him.

This deployment telegraphs its intentions and any German worth his sauerkraut ration will use his first Movement card to laterally transfer his Group B to C and his second to laterally transfer A to B. However, this too can be advantageous for a Russian with a Marsh or Stream card, because he can now afford to hold onto those delay cards knowing that the German will move as soon as possible and that every turn he doesn't move is another turn of advantage for the Russian deployment goals. The German move, being lateral rather than forward, can now be halted very surely, if only temporarily, by a Marsh card. The tricky part is in the numbers of riflemen for B and D. I originally used only a four-man Maneuver group, but the drawback of this was that a single sniper shot could nullify a victory and three men at RR 4 is a big comedown from four at Range Chit 4. Obviously, the more men which were added to D, the larger the margin for error. One could even abandon a pinned man or two to panic in order to move quickly to Range Chit 4. The danger of having too much strength on the right, of course, is that the left becomes too weak. Should the German concentrate his firepower on your fire base he might quickly nullify it and then have an open road to advancing his own Group A to Range Chit 4. For that reason, I favor splitting the difference and going with a six-man fire base and a five-man maneuver group. A Russo-Japanese meeting engagement presents an entirely different set of parameters, so for the sake of brevity we'll end the discussion here.

AMERICAN: The best American set up has proven elusive, and after hundreds of games I still find myself experimenting with different combinations. One such experiment, a 2-6-4 alignment went over like a lead balloon and is recorded for posterity in this issue's Series Replay. The problem is a combination of the American's low morale, lack of a crewed LMG, and the use of machine pistols by both of its leaders. I would much prefer to use the carbine-equipped SL or the '45 variation with two BARs. Ideally, machine pistols should be used with maneuver groups because they are the more likely to become engaged at close ranges. However, you can't afford to throw away the large American smoke advantage by including both Machine-Pistol equipped leaders in the same group. Moreover, the one assigned to the fire group is relatively useless at long range because the BAR does not benefit from a crewing provision.

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Despite these flaws I usually set up with the SL and three best riflemen as the maneuver group in A, and the rest forming an eight-man fire base in B. Although the latter can match the German firepower at RR 1 with nine FP, it is a far more fragile force by being composed of four men with a morale of 2 or less and eight targets in all. As such, it is extremely easy to pin and therefore difficult to move or entrench. If it doesn't get into good terrain fast, it can be put in a hole from which it may never recover.

This usually means that the American is inclined to play a very conservative game, keeping movement to a minimum, and insisting on the best terrain before chancing an advance. The Americans win relatively few games by reaching Range Chit 4 unopposed, but if I am feeling particularly frisky or wish to vary my tactics for a familiar opponent, I often forget about trying to equal the German firepower and go with a seven-man firebase. This allows the maneuvering group to be a bit more adventuresome in the advance to the extent that it can still lose a man and remain a threat to win the game outright while reducing the sheer size of the fire group which makes it such a tempting target. Given the large hand capacity of the Americans, there is also something to be said for two equal groups of six and a dependence on Cross Fire at-

tacks. As far as that goes, I'm still not convinced that the 2-6-4 set up is without merit. The flanking fire opportunities on B which cannot be returned against C seems a worthwhile gamble considering the price is just two morale 1 riflemen which are often a detriment anyway. Analysis of an American vs Japanese encounter is omitted for the sake of brevity, especially in light of the drastic squad composition changes for US Marines.

JAPANESE: The Japanese, like the Germans, share the burden of the initial set up, but because they are so movement-oriented the ability to move and place terrain first is more of a compensation. The Japanese deployment is obviously a variation of the Russian End Run handicapped by initial set up and two less men. However, the Japanese have several unique advantages which compensate them well for these shortcomings.

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Although they have no smoke capacity, the leaders must be deployed separately in the two largest groups to maximize the *Banzai* capacity. All the groups can be moved forward because the Japanese need not fear their squad breaking due to 51% casualties, although movement priority remains D, B, C, and A as was the case with the Russians. However, both the Banzai rules and the uncrewed (and undependable) nature of their LMG increases the importance of the individual transfers of C into B. Otherwise, A and C should move forward if for no other reason than to draw fire away from B and D. Keeping in mind that the Japanese can play Movement cards without hampering their discard capability, it is hard to envision conditions under which the Japanese would ever discard a Movement card.

BRITISH: The British, having the advantage of seeing the Japanese deployment, should probably try to combat it by setting up a six-man firebase in C which is adjacent to 11 of the 13 Japanese men. This way they need not be immediately concerned with a lateral transfer to C and can still call upon 9 FP factors to deal with the first Japanese move of any consequence to RR 1. When the availability of Movement cards and the lack of Fire cards for targets dictates, individual transfers from B to C can increase the firepower base with less danger or disruption than laterally transferring an entire group.

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Group A consists of the SL and his MP and the worst riflemen—both of whom can do without the excitement and bullets that the larger group would attract. The best riflemen and the Bren Gun compose Group C where they can put out the most firepower and also represent the best chance to withstand a Banzai charge or Close Combat. Small groups are much more viable for the British due to the utility of their +1 firepower bonus. Indeed, one might well make a case for them being the best squad with which to use Cross Fire tactics, and therefore increasing the number of their groups from the standard two. However, against the Germans or a more concentrated Japanese deployment I'd be inclined to use a more conventional 2-8 or 4-6 approach.

THE KILLING GROUND

The Killing Ground Chart lists the maximum firepower of each nationality's basic squad in the Patrol scenario at each of the game's six ranges. The chart does not attempt to hypothesize about the makeup of individual groups or the prospect of losses decreasing these relative values. However, it is safe to assume that these values represent the maximum firepower that can be exerted from each range and that as the range closes these values will decrease in proportion to the level of casualties sustained. Nonetheless, it is useful as a quick reference

to determine the optimum range each nationality seeks to sustain its firefight for as long as possible, tempered by the other requirements of the scenario in play.

THE KILLING GROUND CHART

Squad FP/ Range	0	1	2	3	4	5
U.S.	2	12	12	24	28	42
German	4	12	13	22	25	36
Russian	3	4	18	32	33	47
British*	3	12	13	23	25	36
Japanese	2	3	16	29	29	42

*Add 1 FP for each additional attack in excess of one.

Optimum Relative Range for each nationality is stressed in bold.

For example, due to their excellent belt-fed, crewed LMG the German squad enjoys a slight fire-power advantage over all nationalities at ranges in excess of 400 meters. Unfortunately for the German, he won't be able to hold many opponents at that range for very long and it is doubtful whether he should wait until his opponent closes the range before doing so himself. In the Patrol scenario, no one can afford to stay at Range Chit 0. Movement to at least Range Chit 1 is necessary both for the establishment of Aggressive Action Victory Points and to deny an immediate enemy win by occupation of Range Chit 4 with four men by either infiltration or massed Relative Range 5 firepower. Given the necessity to move, it is often best to move first so as to be in position to greet the other guy when he moves to an even closer Relative Range. Note that the German's firepower advantage over the Russian increases dramatically at Relative Range 1 while dropping to a slim disadvantage against the American and British (due to the automatic weapons' moving fire advantage of the former and the more versatile +1 firepower advantage of the latter).

The most obvious need, of course, is for the Japanese and Russians to reach Relative Ranges 2 and 3 where their more numerous riflemen can neutralize the advantages of their adversaries. The American strength at Relative Range 4 is not so pronounced that the American should actively seek firefights at that range. Rather, proportionally little firepower is gained between Relative Range 3 and 4, but the American stands to gain the most from such a closing of the range. The ultimate truth, however, is that the nationalities with but a four-card hand capacity want to reach Relative Range 5 as soon as possible. Only there can the restraints of their smaller hands be minimized by the advantage of numbers and morale in Close Combat, and the added benefits of the Berserk and Banzai rules.

PLAYING YOUR HAND

To quote Kenny Rogers, "You've gotta know when to hold 'em; when to fold 'em"; that decision isn't always as easy as it appears at first glance. For a few examples, let's take a look at the play of specific cards.

TERRAIN:

PREPARE FOR PLAY: The first decision to be made in any game is how to play the terrain one's been dealt during "Prepare for Play". Too many players drop the terrain they've been dealt at the outset without a second thought. However, if a player has a Movement card to go with that terrain he is better off holding onto the terrain in expectation of moving into it on turn 2—especially if he moves first or if it is a particularly effective piece of terrain that he would like to occupy for a while. A player with a five- or six-card hand might want to consider holding onto such a card even without a Movement card—especially if he has plenty of other cards he wants to discard. A player with a four-card hand, however, probably can't afford that luxury and should place his terrain cards rather than wait for a Movement card.

About the only exception to placement of a beneficial card during "Prepare For Play" when one also has a Movement card, is when a player can set up his fire group on a Hill, and he already has a usable Fire card in his hand. This will occur for the German player most often and represents an especially irresistible opportunity when used in conjunction with a Stream or Marsh card.

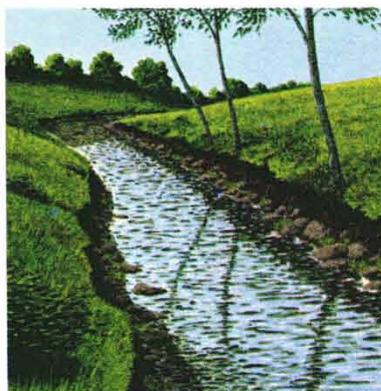
If ever there is a terrain card that should be played during "Prepare For Play" it is the Marsh card because it cannot be refused (as it normally can later during play). Such an opportunity should not be kept waiting in order to place beneficial terrain on one's own group first. Placement of a Stream is not as pressing as a Stream card can never be rejected. Indeed, an American or German player may want to hold onto a Stream card for play at a closer range when he also has usable Fire cards in his hand. If beneficial terrain is placed, it should be allocated to the fire group first, because the maneuver group(s) will be moving as soon as possible anyway.



BUILDINGS: It doesn't take many mental gymnastics to realize that -3 Buildings cards should be saved until they can be played. However, in most scenarios (including our Patrol) the first five Buildings cards to be revealed are cast out of the deck. This brings up the question of how long one holds onto a Buildings card while waiting for it to be activated. Naturally, the more Buildings which have been discarded previously, the shorter time one can expect to wait. Yet, like most problems in *UP FRONT*, there is no set answer and one has to reach this conclusion based on many contributing factors—such as the current makeup of his hand, the board situation, how long he expects to stay in that terrain, and the likelihood that his opponent too is saving a Buildings card. In general, unless one's hand is really garbage, no thought should be given to saving a Buildings card until at least three have been revealed, and then usually only with the American's six-card hand or a -3 Buildings card. The four-card hands can rarely afford to hold onto a Buildings card for long; but they can extract some small measure of revenge by confounding the card counting habits of their adversaries who can by playing their useless Buildings cards as Open Ground, thereby delaying the opponent's use of the terrain and clogging his hand with an ineffectual card. Such cards need not be revealed when returned to the deck and, should enough such opportunities arise, can delay the appearance of the necessary fifth Buildings card into the second deck.

BRUSH: What good is such a lowly terrain card you might ask? "Better than nothing" would be the easiest reply. But as the lowest value beneficial terrain, Brush has a very real value as a delay card in the absence of a Marsh or Stream. In Scenario B, in order to qualify for Aggressive Action Victory Points a group must occupy Buildings. Chances are that any moving group late in a City Fight scenario has his sights set on a Buildings card held smugly in

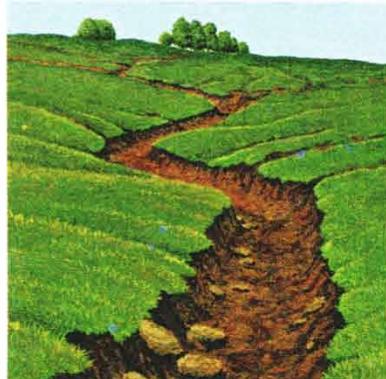
his hand and if it is late enough you can ruin his day by ushering him into Brush instead. At the very least, you will have delayed him by forcing him to reject the Brush and move into his Buildings at his original range chit. Even if he accepts it and moves on you will have bought yourself some time with which to draw the Fire or delay cards you need to repulse him. As for our Patrol scenario, Brush still has its uses. Players, especially American players, are creatures of habit and many will refuse to move under any but the most dire of circumstances unless they have a -2 TEM or better terrain card to move into. Such conservative players can be deprived of either their hefty terrain-security blanket or their advance by discarding a Brush card in their way. Such tactics must be used sparingly, however, or an adversary will learn to bluff his way into terrain he hasn't got. Usually (except in Scenario B) only the American can afford to hold onto a Brush card for lack of a better delay card and such occurrences are chance encounters, but dropping Brush on a Russian or Japanese opponent is rarely a good idea as they usually welcome any terrain they can get. One must also be careful not to get overzealous in this business of discarding terrain. For example, suppose you have just discarded a Marsh card on an advancing group in a Gully which was rejected and thereby turned the advance into a sideways move. Having already deprived your opponent of advancing, is it really worthwhile to discard another delay card on that group which he can reject, thereby negating his sideways move altogether and allowing him to advance once again in the safety of the Gully by playing another Movement card? However, outside the realm of a Gully, any non-flanking or non-lateral transfer sideways move is obviously intended to better a group's terrain and you can rarely go wrong by providing your opponent with some Brush for his trouble, because rejecting it also burns his Movement card.



STREAM: The two Stream cards would be among the most valuable in the deck simply because they cannot be rejected, but they also enjoy a number of side effects which make them far more devastating than their 0 TEM would imply alone. Streams not only require a sideways move to exit, they also carry a 50% likelihood of failure if a Ford is unavailable. Indeed, I vividly recall one game in which I burnt seven straight Movement cards trying to ford a Stream to no avail. By the time I drew a Ford card, my group was so thoroughly pinned, I couldn't play it. That stream resembled the Little Big Horn after Custer's Last Stand. Streams are especially bad news to Americans who suffer from a shortage of movement anyway and whose low morale makes them especially unfond of 0 TEM. All of which is impressive enough, but when one considers that heavy weapons can't be fired from a Stream, LMGs therein must use their bracketed values, all Fire Strength is reduced by one, and that no weapon can be repaired while in a Stream, it behooves one to do everything possible to prolong his adversary's wet feet as long as possible. Numerous small attacks are

preferable to one large attack with the expectation of pinning the opponent so that he cannot attempt to ford. Once an enemy has forded the Stream, remember that he cannot reject a terrain placement without going back into the Stream; so discarding a Marsh card on him takes preference over almost any action you might care to make. Lastly, keep in mind that premature discard of a Stream is no cause for celebration. The American player especially has the card-hand capacity to hold onto a Stream for play against a bigger group or at a closer range when the firepower he can follow up with will be greater. Indeed, an American with no usable Fire card may be wise to allow initial advances to pass unhindered in hopes of playing his ace in the hole at a more opportune time.

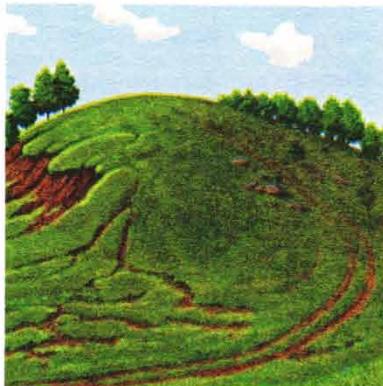
MARSH: Marsh is an extremely good delay card because almost no sane attacker will accept it, but it seldom gets anybody in serious trouble for that very reason and therefore is rarely held for more than a few turns (and almost never in a four-card hand). However, Marsh can become an extremely powerful 1-2 punch when held in conjunction with a Stream card as alluded to above and this is a prized combination—especially by an American on the defense with the hand capacity to accommodate it. As it requires two Movement cards to exit with no hope for smoke (this permitting at least one +2 attack by any fire group), a Marsh card should never be accepted unless the opponent has committed the ultimate *faux pas* of playing it on a group which has reached Range Chit 4 and can thereby claim victory by occupying beneficial terrain. Even if the moving group does not plan to move further, the -1 penalty for fire from a Marsh and the difficulty of infiltration therefrom make acceptance of Marsh terrain under almost any conditions a highly dubious decision.



GULLY: A Gully can be either an extremely valuable piece of terrain or a worthless one—depending on one's goals in the scenario. A player rarely wants to put his fire base in a Gully because doing so leaves him little opportunity to contest his opponent's advances with fire attacks. For this very reason, the Gully can act as a valuable delay card when discarded onto the opponent's principal fire-base group. However, such tactics are risky because the opponent may well have another Movement card already in hand and be quite happy to accept the Gully as a safe lane to yet another advance. The German player, however, can employ his luxury of dual action/discard capability to observe the results of his fire on such a moving group and if he does pin the group he can then decide to dump the Gully, confident that his adversary will be blinded therein for at least several turns if he accepts it.

A Gully discard is also a great followup for the Stream combination placement (provided you want him in the Gully). Just how bad you want him in a Gully will depend not only on the amount of his firepower that you blind, but also on your own ability to take advantage of that blindness with your own Movement and (preferably) terrain cards. Ob-

viously, if you have a group on a Hill the extent of his blindness is not total; but if you are also blessed with usable Fire cards for that Hill group, the chances of keeping your opponent in that Gully blinded to the advance of your maneuver group gives this move the possibility of being a game winner. For the most part, however, Gully cards will be hoarded to play on one's own movement group(s) to allow them to advance free of fire—especially at dangerous Range Chit 3 from where an uncontested advance to Range Chit 4 results in victory in the Patrol scenario. The shortest patrols are usually those in which the same player has managed to parlay all the Gully cards into a quick advance to the Victory Conditions. A player who knows that the Stream cards of the current deck have been accounted for can also use a Gully to make a safe play of a Movement card, thus taking an extra card out of his hand and increasing his chances of drawing a needed card. He can leave the group perpetually moving without fear of drawing fire so long as he remains out of Relative Range 5 and the enemy is not on a Hill. A Gully is also the optimum terrain in which to place your mortar—freeing it from all but hilltop or indirect fire while still allowing outgoing fire.

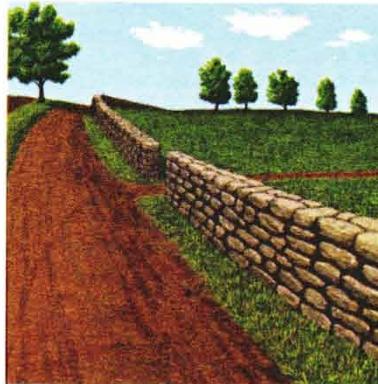


HILL: Occupation of the high ground is amply rewarded; the +1 attack modification for outgoing fire more than compensates for the relatively low protective TEM. This advantage is especially felt at Range 0 where the +1 modification has its strongest proportional effect when used in conjunction with an effective ranged weapon and can give a solid initial edge by hindering the initial movements of the opponent, thereby allowing one's own troops to make the first important advances. Hills are more valuable in the early going as one generally likes better TEM when advancing at close range and one rarely gets the opportunity to entrench at Relative Range 4 or 5. A Hill, being both a sought-after position and one with a low TEM, requires more than the usual consideration when it comes time to weigh the relative value of an entrenchment attempt against that of a discard. This is even true on the other side of the table when deciding on targets. Other considerations being equal, it is often wiser to take a Fire 0 vs a hilltop than a Fire 1 or 2 against other terrain. More often than not, your opponent has placed his best Fire Group on a Hill, and as such, it represents his biggest threat to you—even before one considers the added +1 modification to the attack. It is usually therefore more important to pin men on the hill than elsewhere—not only to reduce the firepower threat to yourself, but to prevent him from entrenching on that Hill. Lastly, if you are playing a scenario with an AFV/IG, the ultimate position in the game is to get that AFV/IG on a Hill—especially if the opposition has ordnance which can be affected by Hull Down status.

WOODS: There is little to be said about Woods in the Patrol scenario. The fact that their -2 TEM can be improved by entrenchment makes them close to the best beneficial terrain in the game. However,

the introduction of indirect fire weapons and AFVs thickens the plot somewhat. If the opponent has offboard artillery or a mortar, Woods lose their -2 TEM to such fire and may be considered inferior to most other types of terrain. The player must judge for himself how serious the indirect fire threat is in that scenario in assessing the relative value of Woods vis-a-vis other terrain. In scenarios containing an AFV, Woods take on an added value as a delay card—forcing AFVs to waste a Movement card in the sideways mode upon exit.

The already valuable Woods, Gully, and Stream cards take on added importance as *Bog* cards when an AFV is involved. An AFV is such a powerful force in the game, that the highest priority should be given to discomfit/safeguard it at every opportunity. Terrain cards requiring the AFV to make a *Bog* check upon entrance will usually serve to turn the iron monsters away for another turn and thereby burn one of what is hopefully a short supply of Movement cards. Moreover, if the defender has ordnance capable of hurting the monster, he is afforded a flank shot as well. Under such circumstances, these cards become extremely valuable as discards although their value as protective terrain is enhanced even further by their added protection against Overrun attacks (as are Brush, Walls, and Smoke; 29.4).



WALLS: About the only thing that needs be said about a Wall card is the obvious desire to place it directly opposite the opposing Fire group. Should the disparity in firepower potential of opposing groups be considerable, one might well give credence to placing the Wall card opposite the fire-base at the expense of placing a more valuable terrain card on a less important group. Otherwise, one need only be concerned about keeping Walls away from opposing AFVs so as to avoid giving them Hull Down benefits in addition to their normal advantages.

OPEN GROUND: As Open Ground can never be discarded onto an opponent, its use is limited to acts of desperation by the owning player. Nonetheless, there are times when such placement is advised. Obviously, one hits Open Ground only to remove the +1 modifiers of movement status or to cease movement so as to be able to fire effectively without the halving effect of moving fire. Usually this occurs to the player with only a four-card hand who has moved in hopes of drawing a terrain card in the very near future, but sooner or later affects almost everyone. However, if one has kept track of the Stream cards (and Minefields if applicable) and doesn't mind cancelling his advance by rejecting a Marsh card, there is little reason to hit the dirt at the first sign of a hand devoid of terrain cards—especially if you don't have any cards you care to discard, or conversely, are in need of a large draw and can't afford the luxury of a single action to stop your advance in Open Ground. For example: if the card you have to use as Open Ground is a Concealment -1 or Rally card, aren't you better off cancelling the +1 Movement modifier of your opponent's fire with that

Concealment card or rallying the men he pins while waiting for the fortuitous draw of a more satisfactory terrain card? Surely, if you are moving out of beneficial terrain that movement modifier is at least nullified by the terrain just left. Clearly then, it is worth drawing even the arrival of the dreaded Stream card to stay moving in Building -3 terrain with a -2 TEM rather than to do a belly flop in the open with a 0 TEM.

So when is the belly flop preferable to a dash through the vines? Well . . . 1) When you have a Fire card that you believe will give your opponent enough problems of his own so that he will leave your public gathering alone *and* it can be delivered only by your non-moving group. It would help to also have a Concealment card that at least makes up the difference of the TEM surrendered by your belly flop. 2) When stuck on a Wire card with no immediate hope of getting off, especially as a non-German player when you have a Cower card to be rid of and actions to perform. 3) When you're so desperate for a Rally card that you'll do anything to increase your Draw capability for the turn. 4) When you've pushed providence as far as you dare, and you decide to get out from under the volcano you're sitting on in the form of those two consecutive movement cards.

(Because I'm a Nice Guy: There is one instance in which it pays to forget your warlike nature and contribute beneficial terrain to your opponent . . . even if he does want it. Should you be fortunate enough to kill a moving man whose principle weapon is of great value you may wish to discard whatever terrain card you can muster on his group to prevent recovery of that weapon.)

ARTIFICIAL TERRAIN CARDS: Smoke and Wire are not terrain cards and great pains have been taken in the rulebook to make that distinction very clear. Not wishing to lead anyone astray, I point out that fact again. A discussion of Minefield and Pillbox cards is omitted as not being germane to the self-proclaimed limitations of this article (i.e., cards applicable to the Meeting of Patrols scenario).



WIRE: As described in both the rules and the Designer's Notes, Wire abstractly represents far more than just manmade obstacles to movement. It is intended as a form of fate card which can take many forms in discomfiting the enemy—of which the Wire representation is only the most graphic and easily grasped. It could also represent an imagined enemy movement which diverts attention or freezes a group in its tracks, or any of a host of other battlefield phenomenon. It is important to grasp this because all too often players feel it should be treated as terrain (i.e., requiring a Movement card before it can be discarded on a moving group). While such use gets the maximum benefit out of a Wire card, the pressures of the game frequently dictate its use without benefit of movement. As a result it is the single most versatile card in the game. One would be hard pressed to define a situation outside the realm of an ending game in which a Wire card cannot be used to advantage even though it can be used only as a discard.

Optimum use is to drop it on a moving group, hopefully in combination with some means of pinning a man therein (thereby increasing the value of the card to a German or elite troop player who enjoys dual fire/discard capability). If the moving group contains a pinned man or lacks a movement card, it may have to consider going to ground—which will ultimately eliminate three Movement cards (the one already played, the one required to remove the Wire card, and the one that will have to eventually be played to get the group out of Open Ground). The only alternative is to remain moving with a +2 modifier to the last played terrain card. Obviously, every effort should be made to maintain the pinned status of the group so as to prolong its stay on these painful barbs. It is the cumulative effect of the Wire's +1 modifier to that of both Movement cards and other Wire cards which makes this card so devastating. Usually if an entire group is blown away at other than Relative Range 5, a Wire card can be found beneath the bodies.

However, Wire cards are often pressed into service without waiting to catch a group on the move. Any substantial group on a Hill is a prime target for Wire because it not only negates the +1 Fire effect of the Hill but reduces crew-served weapons to their bracketed value, and prevents entrenchment attempts, all prime considerations when facing a large firepower concentration. Multiple Wire cards can reduce a position's TEM to manageable levels as well as penalizing its fire. Four-card hands seldom have room for delay cards, requiring them to be discarded as soon as possible for whatever benefit they might bring. Lastly, a player needing a Rally card is then thankful for the chance to discard a Wire on whatever group is bringing fire to bear both to reduce its fire and to feed his hopes for a Rally replacement draw.

While Wire may not be placed in Streams or Marshes, they make excellent greeting cards for groups emerging from same. Although Wire can be used to cause a Bog check, it is far too valuable to be used in that capacity given the small likelihood of success against all but wheeled vehicles. Wire should also never be used against a flanked enemy group in an entrenched hill position (or any other good defensive position), because removing the Wire card by placement of a Movement card allows the defender to void the flank as well while maintaining his position.

SMOKE: Smoke hinders outgoing fire as well as incoming fire, and for that reason is frequently not played, but discarded unused—especially by those with a five-card hand capacity. However, the American's six-card hand and high percentage of Cower cards frequently allows him to hold onto a Smoke card for lack of anything better and the card is not without its uses. The added -1 TEM makes it a valuable precursor to any movement, albeit one which telegraphs an impending move to a waiting enemy who may be encouraged to hold onto a delay or next-range-effective Fire card a little longer as a consequence. And any pinned group lacking a Rally card or stuck in a Wire or Stream is always happy to have a Smoke card or two. The cumulative effects of Smoke also makes it quite productive as an infiltration tool (13.27), and although the American's low morale doesn't make him a likely candidate for initiating close combat once at Relative Range 5, it is still to his advantage to be the infiltrator rather than the infiltratee. Unfortunately for him, however, Smoke affects infiltration attempts both coming and going, so placing smoke at Relative Range 5 would give his opponent first crack at the infiltration effort and probably shouldn't be considered unless the opponent is still moving, or in Marsh, Stream, or Wire, or the American truly does welcome Close Combat.

Unfortunately for the Western Allies (who have the most of the stuff to use) Smoke placement re-

quires an unpinned leader and is subject to the vagaries of the wind (represented by Breeze cards which "blow away" smoke when drawn during any RNC/RPC check). This means that smoke protection is available for only two groups at the most; and if the SL or ASL has been pinned or killed, the Smoke card becomes a Cower card in effect until he is unpinned. A player who wants to place a smoke screen should fire first and place smoke later if the wind allows. A player wishing to keep an already existing smoke screen in play will do well to postpone his fire attacks or at least fire at smaller groups, for every RNC consulted increases the chance of a smoke-clearing breeze. Conversely, an opponent wishing to be rid of a smoke screen will be happy to make fire attacks at ridiculously low odds against the largest group in sight just to increase his chances of a breeze. Should a player plan a "Cross Fire" attack into a smoke-covered group, the smaller attack should be declared and resolved first. Often, smoke is played on the maneuver group for no other reason than to get it out of the hand efficiently without wasting a discard.

However, Smoke really comes into its own when ordnance or AFVs are around. The presence of Smoke on either the firer or the target prevents target acquisition, and an AFV making an OVR against a group in Smoke is subject to adverse effects. Furthermore, an AFV of sufficient ordnance size can place smoke on opposing groups (which is really a neat trick and a considerable advantage when facing Panzerfaust-toting Huns).

TECHNIQUES AND TACTICS

SNIPERS: On the surface of it, one would think there is very little of consequence to say on the play of Sniper cards. When one draws a Sniper card, he is destined to discard it—the only question is when and where. The play of Sniper cards becomes largely a question of target priorities. As a Sniper can affect only one card, the obvious target is that group containing the most valuable card; usually the SL, other things being equal. The problem with this simple idiom is that other things are seldom equal, and like most decisions in *UP FRONT* there is a wide choice of factors to be considered.

Perhaps the least important of factors is the matter of retribution. Every time a sniper attacks, the unpinned survivors of its target group have the option to make a *Sniper Check* which, if successful, ends your ability to ever make another Sniper attack in that scenario; should you be unfortunate enough to draw another Sniper card you can congratulate yourself on the acquisition of another Cower card while trying to keep a straight face. Obviously, you can avoid this unpleasantness altogether only by attacking groups that are completely pinned, or which contain only one unpinned man so that if the attack is successful no one remains to make a *Sniper Check*. Unfortunately, this brilliant solution seldom presents itself; but if it does, it should be given commensurately more weight at the beginning of a scenario when 11 other Sniper cards still remain to be drawn than midway through the third deck where the loss is likely to be minimal. Conversely, the opponent should also give more weight to making a *Sniper Check* in the beginning and should probably disregard the practice altogether once into the third deck (unless he gives up nothing in the attempt). It is doubtful whether a *Sniper Check* should be attempted if it means foregoing a more useful action or discard, but the temptation is great early in the game following a 0 RNC attack. A 0 RNC attack will result in a successful *Sniper Check* 36.4% of the time, falling off to 25.3% for a 1 RNC, and 16.6% for a 2 RNC. Obviously, the desirability of giving up anything at all for a *Sniper Check* decreases rapidly with each Sniper card played and in direct proportion to the size of the RNC drawn.

The single most valuable sniper target is any IG or unbuttoned AFV, and use against anything else while these targets exist borders on criminal misuse of resources. During Patrol, however, the best target is usually the enemy SL in an attempt to reduce the opponent's card hand capacity. A pinned SL will usually draw even a Rally 6 or Rally All card if that's all that is available because no one wants to have a reduced card hand capacity at any price. But perhaps the SL is in a group which isn't much of a threat at the moment and you have pinned men receiving grief from another. In that case, the emphasis shifts to gaining relief for your pinned troops by subtracting FP from the most dangerous enemy group—especially if there is a crewed LMG which can be silenced with a lucky shot or hampered by pinning the ass't crewman. Then too, there is the value of a pin to be considered on any group in Hill, Wire, or Stream for reasons already alluded to.

Yet, the single most important factor to keep in mind when selecting a sniper target is the fact that high morale and/or good terrain are totally negated. A sniper attacks a Building or a group consisting of morale 5 or better with the same effectiveness it musters against a morale 1 man moving in the open. Many players form their groups on the basis of morale—concentrating all the high morale men in the same maneuver group. As these men are more difficult to pin with conventional fire, they should naturally draw sniper attacks. If gaining a kill, any kill, is more important to you than pinning a particular man, you should switch your target emphasis to that group containing the highest percentage of pinned men, because a pin result vs an already pinned man results in a Rout (14.3) or Panic/KIA (6.531).



HERO: The two Hero cards offer a frustrating contrast of high and low utility that makes their relative worth hard to judge. On the one hand, they offer a free action and the combined advantage of Rally and increased FP in the same card, plus a host of special uses. On the other hand, they still fill a spot in the hand and are often used with no more benefit than a lowly Rally 1 card. Just where does one place a Hero card in the hierarchy of value when deciding what to keep and what to discard? The question has few definitive answers unless you have an AFV. Once an AFV enters the game, the value of the Hero card is increased many fold and primarily to the benefit of the AFV player. The ability to use a Hero to negate a Pin result or to bring a buttoned-up AFV back to CE status makes it one of the most valuable cards in the deck to the AFV player, and his needs should be desperate indeed to consider discarding it or using it for any other purpose. The pure infantry scenarios, however, offer no such clear cut decision of its worth.

The Hero is most useful to the American because his six-card hand seldom forces him to discard it, his BAR is a splendid candidate for "herodom" due to its lack of bracketed values, and it allows him to Rally a man and still discard in the same turn—the only time the American can discard

a Cower card and still draw three or more cards. The Hero is less valuable to the German for just the opposite reasons; his LMG is a bracketed weapon, he can always take an action and discard in the same turn, and his limited discard capability will often force him to use the Hero prematurely to increase the flow of cards through his hand in times of stress. Nevertheless, a Hero card has so many uses, it is usually held in high esteem by one and all. Pity the poor Japanese and Russians whose four card-hand precludes them from saving them for very long. The other nationalities, however, if blessed with a reasonably good hand should always try to hold onto the Hero card for a rainy day—even if it means allowing a low value man to panic in some cases. Keep in mind that a Hero card can be played at anytime—including prior to the resolution of an opponent's attack. Why waste a Hero card as a Rally 1 in your own turn when you don't know what the next turn will bring—either in the form of your opponent's fire or your own draw from the deck. Perhaps your opponent can't fire next turn and your next draw will bring a Rally 1 card; the moral is "never play a Hero card before you have to". Wait until your opponent's Sniper attack has settled on a pinned man, or his Fire attack has cleared the preceding man without a malfunction cancelling his attack before playing your Hero.

Other oft-forgotten Hero usage tricks include playing a drawn Hero card immediately as a Rally 1 thus enabling you to draw another card (or two in the case of a pinned SL), and saving a Hero card until the end of the first or second deck so as to prevent an Endurance check (33.7) on a valuable wounded man and averting the 50% chance of a KIA for another deck. A Hero also not only rallies a man attempting to infiltrate who fails his MC (10.43) but gives him a second chance at that infiltration attempt in the same turn. Ultimately though, the most devastating use of the Hero is as a combination Rally and double firepower card, resulting in a maximum possible pinning of as much as 24 FP factors for a flamethrower or 12 for a Bren Gun at Relative Range 5.

CONCEALMENT: There's more to the play of Concealment cards than smacking them down everytime someone fires at you. Concealment –2 and –3 cards are very valuable and ideally should be saved to cover advances to new terrain—especially at the closer ranges where fire attacks take on devastating strength. The more numerous Concealment –1 cards are of less value and are often frequently discarded from pat or shortaged hands in order to increase the flow of cards. Indeed, one of my most frequently encountered dilemmas is whether to save a Concealment –1 card or a Rally 1 card when I have no other Rally card. The decision usually is swayed by the nationality factor (i.e., Russians save the Rally, Germans the Concealment, and Americans flip a coin). Ideally, of course, one decides to save or use a Concealment card depending on a combination of the gameboard situation, the strength of the fire attack, and the other cards in his hand. For example, a player with a pinned, moving group in wire will play any Concealment card regardless of strength, both because he can't afford any further losses and because he needs to vacate a card from his hand. A player with an unpinned group undergoing a 1 or less strength attack may want to save even a Concealment –1 card and allow the attack to be resolved unchallenged because he has a surplus of Rally cards in his hand and no pressing need to perform any other action in the next turn. Even a 6 RNC will not kill an unpinned man on a 1 or less Fire attack so, as long as you have sufficient Rally capability to deal with the consequences, why use a scarcer commodity? The decision is not so clear cut when pinned men or higher strength Fire attacks are involved, however, because there is always the danger of casualties.

Generally, one plays a Concealment card whenever it will reduce the chance of sustaining irrevocable casualties, but even this rule has its exceptions.

Suppose you are without a Rally card and your SL is pinned—thus reducing your card hand capacity by one. Should you play your Concealment –3 card to save your pinned SL or should you save it for later use to cover the advance of your four-man maneuver group to range chit 4? If I also have a Movement and terrain card in my hand, I'll have no trouble bidding adieu to Sarge; but if I'm lacking one of those ingredients, then what? That's just one of a million hypothetical situations that constantly arise to place players on the horns of one dilemma after another. The decision points are frequent and mind boggling—I have yet to even begin to contemplate them all.

Concealment cards are also handy to have during *Infiltration* attempts and *Close Combat* resolution. But their single most important use is to reduce the To Hit frequency of ordnance weapons since in so doing they also reduce the maximum effect of those hits (25.4) by reducing the size of the RNC drawn which can be added to the basic hit effect. A glance at Table 2c in Jim Burnett's fine accompanying article "THE NUMBERS OF UP FRONT" will reveal that the most effective use of Concealment cards occurs when one is able to drop a 0-1 range shot to a 0 To Hit probability (a drop of 22.2%), followed in order by reductions of the 0-2, 0-3, and 0-4 category. It obviously pays big dividends to use Concealment cards anytime an opponent has a 0-1 To Hit frequency or better. To Hit frequencies of 0 or less can easily be overlooked in favor of saving a desired Concealment card.

Occasionally a defending player will have such a perfect hand that he will "Pass" rather than change his hand while waiting for his opponent to walk into a trap. This can be disconcerting to an inexperienced attacker who not only has the burden of carrying the attack to the enemy, usually against time pressure—and now must walk into the Valley of Death knowing the Devil has a pat hand. An attacker with his wits about him, however, will realize there are two solutions to the problem. Either he can freely discard in search of his own pat hand, reassured that he is burning much less of the deck than if his opponent were also playing. Or he can "Pass" too and force his opponent into an action or a discard (4.6). The latter course puts at least one dent in his pat hand the turn before you embark on your next advance with your own pat hand fully intact. Almost every tactic has an appropriate countermeasure in *UP FRONT*.



CROSS FIRE Cross Fire is my own definition for any two fire attacks on the same group in the same player turn. This frequently occurs naturally simply because it takes two groups to muster the necessary Firepower to use two different Fire cards—especially with groups of near equal strength. Cross Fire becomes more interesting as a point for discussion when it is done by choice by splitting the use of two or more Fire cards between different groups as separate actions even though one group has the

necessary firepower to use them all. The theory behind opting for a Cross Fire attack is that two low odds attacks are more likely to cause casualties due to Panic of men pinned by the first attack, than one single large attack is likely to cause KIAs. This tactic is usually employed against an unpinned group whose owner appears to have cornered the market on Rally cards. The sole advantage of a Cross Fire as opposed to a concentrated attack is that the opponent has no chance (barring a Hero) to rally his pinned men before they are attacked again. The tactic is most useful against men with low morale and high card hands for the storage of Rally cards (Americans) or men with low Panic values (Japanese).

The Cross Fire technique has other advantages too, including a number of tricks that can be used on an opponent expecting to be the target of but one attack. For example, let us assume your opponent has a Concealment –1 card which he really doesn't want to keep. By leading with the weaker of your two attacks, you may get him to waste that Concealment against a poor attack, and then be free to strike with the main attack free of Concealment problems. Furthermore, because you don't have to declare all actions simultaneously and can await the outcome of one attack before declaring the other, you have the advantage of flexibility. If the first attack does not pin anyone, you may want to forego the second, especially if you can take another action with that group, and thereby save at least part of your Fire capability for the next turn should your opponent opt to move and present you with a more opportune target. Obviously, the better the TEM of the target, the less advantageous Cross Fire is since extra fire power must be consumed negating the terrain modifier. As a general rule, Cross Fire attacks should not be attempted against any group in –2 or better terrain. In addition, extra consideration should be given to Cross Fire attacks when a target is in +1 or +2 terrain because the TEM is now favorable to the attacker and can be applied more than once with multiple attacks.

Conversely, concentrating fire has its uses too. Oftentimes when an opposing group is situated in good terrain, it is almost futile to attempt low strength attacks. At such times it is best to exercise patience and accumulate Fire cards for a combined punch rather than fritter away fire opportunities piecemeal and trust to luck. Unfortunately, the pressures of the game situation usually dictate using whatever fire is available as soon as it is available because a group with a lot of firepower usually means close proximity to the enemy—and that means a large capacity for return fire. However, in those fleeting moments of exquisite joy when a nearby enemy is helplessly pinned before a nearby flanking group, patience becomes a virtue while waiting for the extra Fire cards which will administer the *coup de grace*.

MALFUNCTION: Weapon breakdowns are always unpleasant, especially when one has just advanced to Relative Range 5 against the business end of a MG which is usually not predisposed to look upon your approach as a neighborly visit. In such a situation, one doesn't mince words but repairs his weapon as soon as possible unless he has a masochistic target fetish. Yet, it is seldom that simple. Repair attempts have to be assessed a certain priority in the hierarchy of actions or discards to be considered. Like so many other factors, this intrusion of fate on the battlefield presents the player with an entire new set of choices to ponder. Which is more important: attempting to repair a weapon or trying to entrench? As always, there is no clear cut answer because so many variables enter into each decision. How valuable is the weapon, or the man possessing it for that matter? Do you have a Fire card made unusable by the absence of that weapon? How vulnerable are you to fire in your

WEAPON BREAKDOWN, REPAIR, AND LOSS PROBABILITY CHART

WEAPON	AMERICAN	GERMAN	RUSSIAN	BRITISH	JAPANESE
Rifle	1.9/63.6/1.9	1.9/63.6/1.9	1.9/50.0/1.9	1.9/63.6/1/9	1.9/5.0/1/9
Carbine or AR	1.9/50/0/1.9	1.9/36.4/4.9	1.9/36.4/4.9	—	—
Machine Pistol	1.9/36.4/9.9	1.9/36.4/9.9	1.9/36.4/4.9	1.9/63.4/9.9	1.9/75.3/9.9
LMG	1.9/50.0/4.9	1.9/36.4/9.9*	1.9/36.4/9.9*	1.9/50.0/4.9	4.9/36.4/9.9
MMG	1.9/63.6/1.9*	1.9/50.0/4.9*	1.9/36.4/4.9*	1.9/53.0/4.9*	1.9/36.4/4.9*
ATR	—	1.9/36.4/9.9	1.9/36.4/9.9	1.9/36.4/4.9	1.9/36.4/9.9
Flame-Thrower	4.9/1.9/50.0	4.9/1.9/50.0	4.9/1.9/50.0	4.9/1.9/50.0	4.9/1.9/50.0
LATW	9.9/4.9/50.0*+	9.9/4.9/35.4*+	—	16.7/16.7/36.4	—
Mortar	4.9/50.0/9.9*+	4.9/25.3/16.7*+	4.9/25.3/16.7*+	4.9/36.4/9.9*+	4.9/36.4/9.9*+
Other Ordnance	4.9/50.0/1.9+	Same	Same	Same	Same
Radio	4.9/16.7/9.9+	4.9/9.9/9.9+	4.9/9.9/16.7+	4.9/9.9/9.9+	4.9/9.9/16.7+

Each set of figures represents breakdown/repair/and permanent loss probability as read from left to right.

* A crew-served weapon whose breakdown probability increases when using bracketed values

+ Breakdown probability is only for first RNC drawn; the actual breakdown probability of other weapons is considerably higher when used to attack multi-target groups.

current position? What is the "count" on red 6's (or 5's for the more susceptible weapons)? How badly do you need to move cards through your hand? Do you have a Cower card that needs to be discarded (for a non-German player)? These are only a handful of the factors to be considered and the process must be repeated for every other relative choice: repair or fire, repair or move, repair or rally, etc.

Surely no general rule more meaningful than always remembering to attempt repair if you have nothing else to do can be all encompassing; but there are a few relevant factors that can guide your decision. Aside from the lowering of one's available firepower, a malfunction also means a drop in morale/panic values as long as it persists. Thus, a repair attempt is an effort to improve upon your defensive potential as well as your offensive capabilities. An entrenchment attempt is successful only 27.2% of the time (slightly less after the first deck due to prescribed removal of terrain cards), whereas most weapons, depending on weapon type, can be repaired 50% of the time ranging from a high of 63.6% for most rifles to a low of 1.9% for a flamethrower (see Weapon Repair Probability chart). On the other hand, entrenchments can only be attempted if the group is unpinned and free of wire, while repair attempts are not so encumbered and can still be attempted later after being so afflicted in the absence of a Rally card. It is probably generally better to rally a pinned man than to attempt a weapon repair; but if the weapon is an extremely valuable one or the pinned man a not too vital one, this becomes less readily apparent. A player can also be understandably hesitant about using a high Rally card to rally one man, especially if there is some other useful action he can take in the meantime while hoping to draw a lower and more efficient Rally card in the interim. The permutations of factor and counter-factor are practically infinite.

Perhaps our attention would be better spent trying to avoid the affliction in the first place, rather than contemplating the cost of the care. Exercising preventive medicine in this case means embracing some very simple but frequently overlooked practices. As alluded to earlier, you can't play *UP FRONT* in constant fear of incurring a malfunction result, but you can attempt to minimize the risk even without counting cards. For starters, never use a group containing a valuable weapon (like a LMG) to deliver an attack when a group of riflemen could administer equal damage. Sometimes it's even worth foregoing a slightly better attack from a Hill position or directly opposite a Wall if it means the

LMG group can entrench on the Hill while the riflemen chance discovering the unaccounted for red 6 RNCs. The most obvious example of this principle is use of a bazooka, Piat or panzerschreck against infantry targets when an AFV is still to be dealt with. Chancing a malfunction of these valuable high-breakdown frequency weapons against a non-AFV target is rarely an acceptable risk. One must also be aware of the added danger of firing a crewed weapon with the bracketed value. In almost every case, this at least doubles the chance of a malfunction. Moreover, such occurrence isn't limited to the absence of an asst. crewman; occupation of Wire, Marsh, or Stream also bears the burden of bracketed firepower values, and with it the added likelihood of malfunction. Lastly, one can slightly reduce the incidence of breakdown for select weapons in a multi-weapon fire group by not positioning them in the first or second positions within certain sized fire groups (see Table 5 of Jim Burnett's "UP FRONT BY THE NUMBERS"). The variance in the RPC draw bias towards the forward position ranges from 2.5% in a four-man group to nearly double that in an eight-man group. This slight RPC bias also comes in handy when enemy infiltrators start jumping on people in Close Combat and snipers are searching for targets. Moreover, the safest position in any group is to the rear. The last position in any group is less vulnerable than any position before it (barring the presence of a smoke screen) because a malfunction could occur earlier in the attack resolution process and reduce or even cancel the remainder of the fire attack before it gets to the final position. Moral: leaders and valuable weapons to the rear.

FLANKING FIRE: Flanking fire is the great equalizer in *UP FRONT*. Just when you've settled down at range chit 3 in -3 strength protective terrain and think you've got the game by the tail, your opponent whips out a Flank card, doubles his firepower, and threatens to blow you into the next room if you don't vacate the premises. A well-played Flank card has turned the tables in many a game, but it usually takes considerable coordination to turn the fortuitous appearance of one of the four Flank cards into a game winner. Usually, but not always . . . The classic art of bluffing has its applications also and *Poker* players can practice their craft while conning an opponent into making a hasty exit of his haven for fear of an enormous attack that will never come for lack of big Fire cards. It takes a lot of intestinal fortitude (or stupidity) to stand fast in front of a flanking group with 9 or more firepower factors which, when doubled, will

enable it to play any Fire card in the deck (and probably several of them simultaneously). Generally speaking, if the group is close enough to have any firepower of consequence, it's wise to pack your bags before he hits terrain. Still there is something devilishy irritating about being suckered out of Buildings and into a Stream when the perpetrator never had so much as a Fire 1 card to his name.

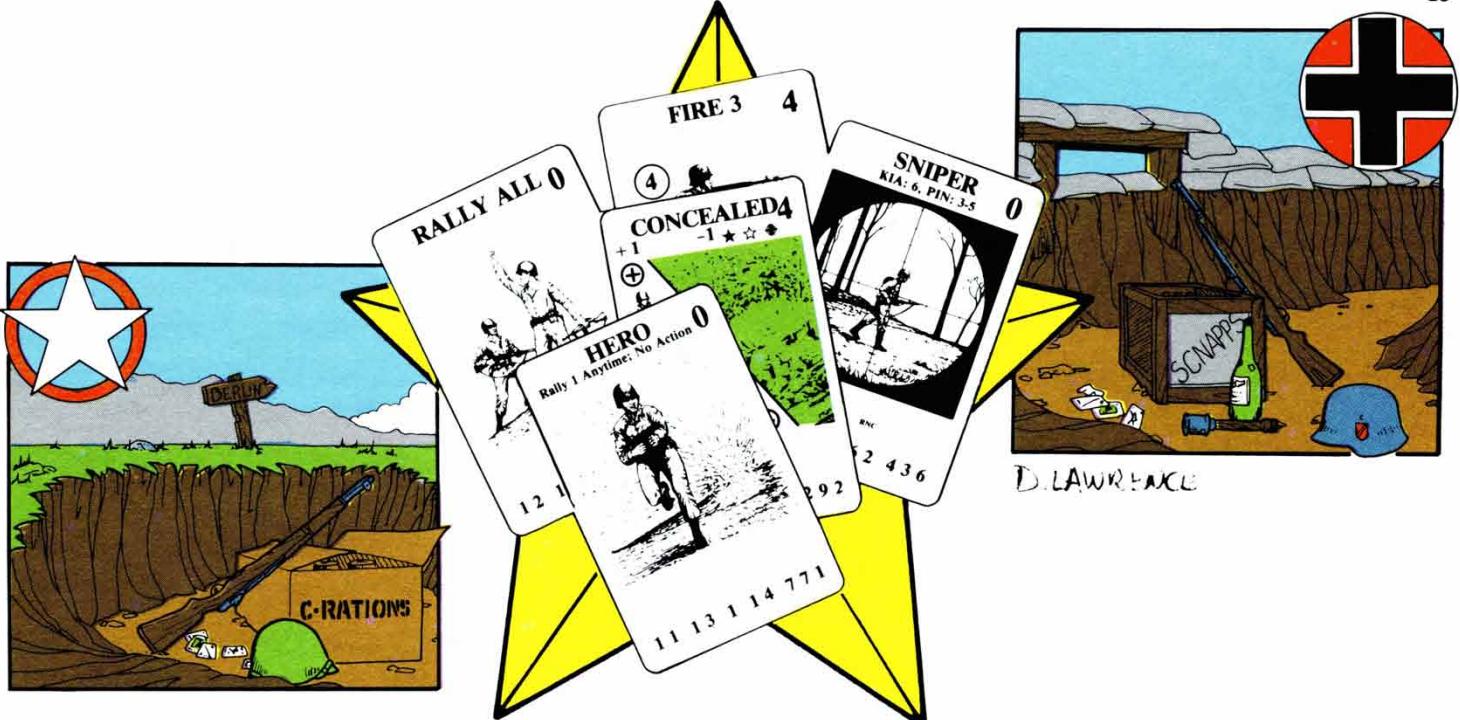
Bluffing aside, flanking presents a very strong opportunity which, when played under optimum conditions against a pinned opponent can devastate even the strongest enemy position. Like all courses of action, however, it can backfire and the pluses and minuses of countless factors must be weighed before making the decision. However, if you have the big Fire card which such a move will make usable, and if you have an equal or better terrain card than the one you presently occupy, it's usually hard to resist. Target groups will often abandon pinned men to their fate, so great is their dread of the envisioned onslaught to follow.

The biggest single thing to remember about flanking fire is that it can only be used against adjacent groups—not directly opposite groups—and the target group must be fronted by a directly opposite group. This means that the side which fields more groups will have more opportunities to use Flanking Fire, and conversely will be subject to ill effects far less. "Natural Flanking Fire", which occurs without use of a flanking card by moving past an adjacent group, seems to be a much rarer occurrence (as is encirclement) because it requires movement past Relative Range 5; usually when groups reach such close quarters they are too busy throwing lead, being pinned, engaging in infiltration and Close Combat, or all three to "waste" turns with further movement. However, a group which has no fire cards and little ambition for Close Combat and is still capable of movement could do far worse than moving into a natural flanking fire position because it lengthens the range and offers an alternative to the discard for creating card flow in pursuit of those missing Fire cards. And if the target group is unable to respond, it could lead to encirclement from which few survivors ever emerge.

So, our travels through the cards of *UP FRONT* comes to an end. Some may think our conclusion overdue, but much remains unsaid. Many weapons and rules were not even mentioned, and others only in passing. Each scenario presents a new approach with countless permutations of the factors already discussed. My own interests, after virtually hundreds of games, now focuses on play of that first basic scenario—A Meeting of Patrols—albeit with a new twist—simultaneous team play of two games side-by-side with one partner helping the other whenever he can spare the chance. Draf! Private Greenwood has been pinned. "How about some covering fire, partner?"



Range	To Hit #	MG FP
0	0	4
1	0-1	5
2	0-2	6
3	0-3	7
4	0-4	8
5	0-5	9



UP FRONT BY THE NUMBERS

An Analysis of the Odds

By Jim Burnett

A central focus of any game or game system is its representation of random events. Supposedly, all other factors are known to the players and are ideally used in the most efficient manner possible. It is left, then, for the game to create everything from the lack of command knowledge to the basic chance happenings of a battlefield in some random manner. In *UP FRONT*, this is achieved by the card deck. Through a *tour-de-force* of design and development effort, the deck is used to cover a myriad of uncertainties. It not only takes the place of the familiar dice for combat resolution but confers terrain, movement, the ability to fire, and many other elements of squad level combat.

One of the deck's main features is to both represent and separate the two primary vagaries of the battlefield: the fog-of-war and the uncertainty of actions. The focus of this article is on the statistically predictable functions of the deck, since most of the spectrum of the results of combat can be represented by hit probabilities, blast radii, average casualties, etc. These, then, will be quantified below for the use of the gamer.

We would be somewhat remiss, however, if we did not first make at least passing mention of the other factor—fog-of-war. This is represented by the lack of knowledge of the cards held by your op-

ponent and the order of those left in the deck. The player still is left with the rather generous intelligence of the cards already discarded and the composition of the opposing force. (It might be interesting and more realistic to cover the personnel cards on the table with a sheet of paper until they fire or are within Range 2.) The cards held by your opponent are another matter. These will vary both with needs and availability. A few general expectations are valid, though. An ideal hand will consist of one each of terrain, movement, fire and rally cards. The German has the luxury of adding a Concealment card and the US player can even afford to hold on to special cards such as Mines, Wire, or Sniper without disturbing the mix. Note that this doesn't mean that such cards will not be present in the Soviet hand, just that he will have to give up other flexibilities to retain them over a long span of time. Situations will also play a role in the desired hand. Movement and terrain are more desirable at the start of a game. Fire, concealment and rally are worth more later. You can expect that an opponent on the tactical defensive will be discarding movement and terrain cards (except Marsh and Stream) in favor of fire and special effect cards. Per this, the discard phase is one of the most important facets of a turn. Knowing what to hold and what to dump is crucial to success. In the same light, a count of a few critical cards is necessary. By keeping up with the number of Mine, Sniper, Marsh, and Stream cards discarded, you can make movement at times which promise a greater likelihood of success. If you are like most players and cannot remember every card played, at least look for these. A final hint for those scenarios with definite offensive and defensive sides is in order. Since time is judged by the use of the deck, it is to the advantage of the defensive player to "spend" cards and the offensive player to save them. The defender, therefore, can fire at atrocious odds at large groups and waste ten cards in resolving the fire attack. Soviet players will often ditch whole hands again and again if the cards are only marginally useful. The attacker will be forced to

retaliate with swift movement and optimal fire. There are, of course, many other tricks available to the players. The rest of this article will attempt to put them on a firm statistical footing.

Before beginning our analysis of the full 162 card deck, let us look at the contents of a single card. In the upper right hand corner is the basic Random Number (RN)—similar to a dice roll in that it gives a bell curve of results from minus six to plus six, including both plus and minus zero. This number is used for the resolution of combat situations from Fire (6.5, 14.3, etc.) to Close Combat (20.7) to Overrun (29.2)—as well as ordnance To Hit (25.3), sniper checks (14.4), fording attempts (8.53), weapons repair (19.3) and reacquisition (18.2, 20.91), morale checks (20.21). The center of the card is devoted to the status and actions possible for a squad. These include fire, movement, terrain, and rally with a differentiation of capabilities by nationality for certain actions. At the bottom of the card are the Random Position (RP) numbers. These are in ten groups of one through zero and range within each group from one to the group size. These numbers give random results for panic (6.53), rout (6.531), sniper attacks (14.2), execution (15.5), weapon malfunction (19.43), close combat (20.52), berserk (20.9), mines (24.31), and wounds (33.1).

Number	Percent
1	0.62
2	1.23
3	1.85
4	2.47
5	3.09
6	3.70
7	4.32
8	4.94
9	5.56
10	6.17

TABLE 1 Percentage of cards out of 162

RN	Number	Percent
0	44	27.2
1	36	22.2
2	28	17.3
3	22	13.6
4	16	9.9
5	10	6.2
6	6	3.7

TABLE 2a Quantity of Each Random Number in the deck. For all numbers, half are black and half are red.

They may also be used for set-up of DYO's (43). Use of the numbers is called a Random Position Check (RPC). These numbers are also red or black (for minus or plus), which influence success or failure in infiltration (20.3), bogging (28.53), or ATMM's versus overruns (31.22). They may even be treated similarly to RN's for resolution of close combat versus AFV's (28.8). The cards are graphically as stunning as the rest of the game and, what's better, are of playing card quality so that repeated shuffling will not degrade their performance. [As a hint to the shuffling, divide the deck with your opponent and then split your half. Shuffling each half while cross-cutting them, cross-cut with your opponent to further mix the cards. Five repetitions of this should result in a good mixture when the deck is re-assembled.]

Now for the expectations of what you will receive when drawing your cards. Table 1 is a summary of percentages out of 162 for a number of cards. The table is limited to ten to save space. If you feel the need for higher number probabilities, a small amount of decimal point shifting and addition should suffice.

Table 2a, 2b, and 2c cover the Random Numbers. Table 2a is a simple listing of the number of cards for each RN and the percentage. These cards are evenly divided between black and red (plus and minus). Table 2b expands the listing by giving the quantity for all numbers and the accumulated total and percentage. This can be read as a declining percentage by merely reversing black and red. For example, if you wish to know your chances on a morale check for a "4" morale soldier against a resolved "2" strength fire attack, looking at the black "2" row gives 25.3%. Table 2c gives the percentages necessary for the To Hit (25.3) chances of ordnance. If a black result is required for hull down (25.31) or moving (25.32, 33), the percentage should be halved. Note the large difference between "0" and "0-1".

Tables 3a, 3b, and 3c cover the expectations of card draws to fill your hand for actions and terrain. Table 3a gives the cards which are non-nationality dependent. The notes section for Minefields shows the fire strength for each card. For snipers, the PIN,

RN	Number	Sum	Percent
6	3	3	1.9
5	5	8	4.9
4	8	16	9.9
3	11	27	16.7
2	14	41	25.3
1	18	59	36.4
0	22	81	50.0
0	22	103	63.6
1	18	121	74.7
2	14	135	83.3
3	11	146	90.1
4	8	154	95.1
5	5	159	98.1
6	3	162	100.0

TABLE 2b Quantity, sum and percentage for Random Numbers are broken down by red and black, respectively.

TO HIT Number	Percent
3	13.6
2	17.3
1	22.2
0	27.2
0-1	49.4
0-2	66.7
0-3	80.3
0-4	90.2
0-5	96.4

TABLE 2c Percentage of success for TO HIT Numbers. For situations where only black numbers apply, these percentages must be halved.

KIA values are given. The 48 Fire cards are broken down by their strengths and then the number of firepower factors required to use each card is noted. Table 3b lists the nationality dependent cards by type and nationality. Note that the total number of cards here and in 3a do not necessarily sum to 162. This is because of the split-action cards which may have both halves applicable to a given nation. A study of this table will give an understanding of the characteristics of each nationality, as will Table 3c which gives the conditional abilities for radio usage broken down by nationality. Table 3c includes all of the conditions listed vertically on the right hand side of the card, as well as noting that each card is open ground when reversed. A careful study of these three tables should give you an idea of what should be possible in a game. Again, the reader should at least be able to keep up with certain critical occurrences such as knowing when there are no more Streams or Minefields in the deck.

Another warning is applicable here. The percentages on all occurrences are based on the full deck. In practice, this is never so, since there is a marked tendency for certain cards to be either discarded per scenario rules, in a player's hand as noted above, or on the table as terrain. This is especially true when a deck has ended and there are likely to be as many as 20 cards which are not available for re-shuffle. These in particular tend to be terrain cards. A short examination of the deck will show that these are quite often zero or low number RN's. This will make a difference in expected distribution and at the same time makes up for the skewing present because there are plus and minus zeroes in the deck.

Table 4a is a rather complicated way of giving hints on fire group make-up. The 48 Fire cards are listed by number of cards for each firepower and the sum for all cards equal or less. The average column is the average attack strength generated by the cards for given firepower. The average and the sum are then multiplied to give an effectiveness rating. This rating is a result of the choices between fire group size, weapons, and range which should indicate how to get the most frequent and effective fire from the minimum number of men given the distribution of cards which will allow the group to fire. The player should also study the table with regards to his tactical situation. A defensive group will wish to maintain effective fire over all ranges while an assault section may only be interested in a high volume of fire at close range. A quick glance will tell you that a fire group with 2, 4, 8, or 14 fac-

Card Type	US	German	USSR
Smoke	5	2	0
Concealed 1	8	8	12
Concealed 2	3	4	5
Concealed 3	2	2	2
Cower	7	4	4
Rally 1	5	7	7
Rally 2	5	5	4
Rally 3	4	4	3
Rally 4	3	3	2
Rally 5	2	2	2
Rally 6	1	1	1
Rally All	1	1	1
Movement	24	27	30

TABLE 3b Quantity of cards available by card type for types which have differing amounts for different nationalities.

Card Type	All	US	German	USSR
Open Ground	162			
Breeze	9			
Ford	6			
Flank	4			
Radio	8	7	9	

TABLE 3c Quantity of provisional card types. Radio cards are broken down by nationality.

tors is inefficient when compared with a group with one less factor. They gain nothing in attack strength to make up for the lesser number of Fire cards they have available. Using this line of reasoning, a group of ten factors has the greatest total output per card available. (Note that because five is also an acceptable result—although not optimal—a group of five bolt-action rifles will make a very good fire group but the same weapons used by four men exhibits each point of inefficiency. Three rifles and a machine pistol is also a viable group. Table 4b summarizes the fire power of these three groups versus relative range. The reader is encouraged to make up the same table for each of his own groups at set-up time. They may provide hints for minor changes which will give major benefits.)

Table 5 is a compilation of the available results under the Random Position numbers. The number of red and black numbers are listed and then a breakdown by occurrence for each. There does seem to be one small error in the "9" row (destined for correction in the next edition). All of the other rows are evenly divided where possible, but this row

Card Type	Number	Notes
Brush	6	
Minefield	2	(Attack: 4,5)
Hill	3	
Stream	2	
Buildings ²	4	
Buildings ³	4	
Marsh	2	
Gully	3	
Woods	5	
Wall	3	
Pillbox	1	
Sniper	4	(Pin,KIA: 2,4; 3,5; 3,6; 4,6)
Wire	3	
Hero	2	
Fire	48	(factors required)
Fire 1	9	(1,1,2,2,3,3,4,4,5)
Fire 2	8	(1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8)
Fire 3	7	(3,4,5,6,7,8,9)
Fire 4	6	(7,8,9,10,11,12)
Fire 5	6	(10,11,12,13,14,15)
Fire 6	6	(13,14,15,16,17,18)
Fire 7	4	(15,16,17,18)
Fire 8	2	(17,18)

TABLE 3a Quantity of cards available by card type. The Fire cards are broken down by firepower.

Firepower Factors	Number	Sum	Average Fire	Product
18	3	3	7.00	21.00
17	3	6	7.00	42.00
16	2	8	6.50	52.00
15	3	11	6.00	66.00
14	2	13	5.50	71.50
13	2	15	5.50	82.50
12	2	17	4.50	76.50
11	2	19	4.50	85.50
10	2	21	4.50	94.50
9	2	23	3.50	80.50
8	3	26	3.00	84.00
7	3	29	3.00	87.00
6	2	31	2.50	77.50
5	3	34	2.00	68.00
4	4	38	1.75	66.50
3	4	42	1.75	73.50
2	3	45	1.33	60.00
1	3	48	1.33	64.00

TABLE 4a Value per Firepower factor. The table gives the number of cards available for use by each size fire group as a sum and the average value of each applicable fire card. The product gives a weighted value for each group size.

Range	5 Rifles	4 Rifles	3 Rifles, MP
0	0	0	0
1	5	4	3
2	5	4	3
3	10	8	7
4	10	8	9
5	15	12	14

TABLE 4b Firepower generated by differing sizes of groups at different ranges. For comparison, utilize Table 4a.

RPN	Red	Black	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
0	12	150	17	17	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
9	15	147	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
8	19	143	21	21	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
7	26	136	24	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23
6	36	126	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
5	49	113	33	33	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32
4	65	97	41	41	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
3	84	78	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54
2	107	55	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81
1	129	33	162									

TABLE 5 Distribution of the Random Position Numbers, both by color and number.

has 17 under "1" and 19 under "7" which leads one to suspect that one of the black "7's" should have been a "1". The occurrence of red results within each RP group is as smooth as possible. An illustration for the use of this table is that Infiltration versus a ten man group without modifiers is successful only 7.4% of the time but rises to 79.6% against a single man. Close Combat versus AFVs (28.8) is resolved with rows "2", "4", or "5". The preponderance of red results for the lower numbers reflects the greater difficulty of attacking open versus closed vehicles. Also evident is the slight advantage to the positioning of leaders and critical crew and weapons at least third in a group. One chance in 162 may be small but it does exist.

The standard caveat will once again be repeated. Odds are no more than that. Just because the above tables show that a Sniper card is a 2.47% chance and sixes happen 3.7% of the time, you should not be totally amazed when the 0.1% chance hits and your squad leader is dead. The wise player realizes that occasionally, despite his best efforts, results will be unfavorable. It is the use of available information to minimize these occurrences which gives such players a long term winning edge. Also, despite the plethora of data given above, *UP FRONT* is a heavily psychological game. Just as in poker, the best hand will not survive a successful bluff. Fear of your opponent's hand and the next card in the deck can have the same effect as fear on the battlefield. Perhaps this is what gives the game its character and niche in an over-crowded field and this feature is due to the uniqueness of the card deck.

May you always draw the ones you need.



SO THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING

Titles Listed 91

Total Responses: 432

Rank: Title	Pub	Rank	Times
		Last	On
		List	Freq.
1. Third Reich	AH	4	20
2. Russian Campaign	AH	5	20
3. G.I.	AH	2	10
4. Squad Leader	AH	1	20
5. Flat Top	AH	—	1
6. Up Front	AH	16	2
7. VITP	AH	17	6
8. War & Peace	AH	8	2
9. B-17	AH	3	3
10. Empires in Arms	ADG	—	1
11. Panzerkrieg	AH	—	1
12. Cross of Iron	AH	6	20
13. Longest Day	AH	—	1
14. Panzer Leader	AH	11	2
15. Bull Run	AH	—	1
16. Civilization	AH	—	1
17. COD	AH	—	1
18. Panzerblitz	AH	13	3
19. Titan	AH	14	4
20. WS&IM	AH	20	5

As usual, quite a change from the last report. No less than seven titles dropped off the listing, all of them just short of enough votes to make the top twenty. The listing, indeed displays more compactness than usual, the "Frequency Ratio" being—except for that of *THIRD REICH*—extremely tight. This may indicate an increasing diversity among our readership's taste; or, it may simply indicate that more readers are making their tastes known in the form of responding to our survey. A few entries on our list this issue are notable. *BULL RUN*, in reaction to our recent feature, comes onto the rating list for the first time. *TITAN* continues to be the only fantasy title to consistently appear on the survey, a sure mark of its strength among our history-minded readership. And, an event—*Empires in Arms*, a superb effort by Australian Design Group, is the second non-Avalon Hill title to make our ongoing survey.

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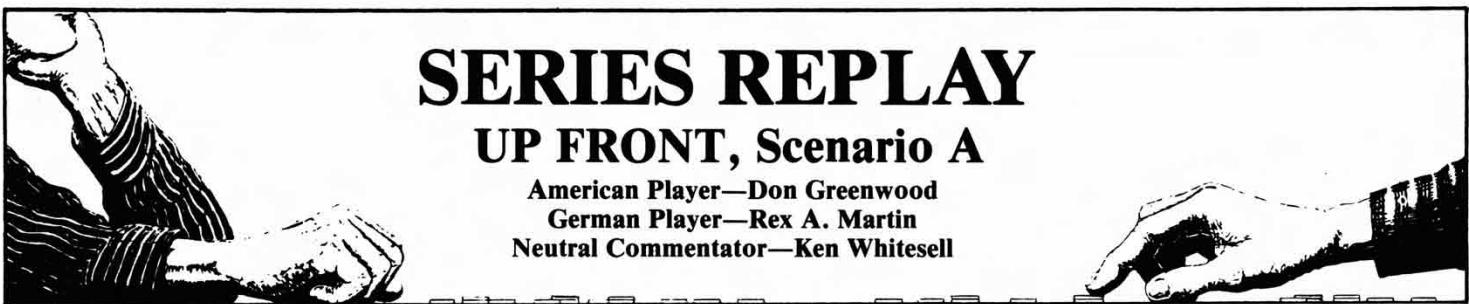
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SERIES REPLAY

UP FRONT, Scenario A

American Player—Don Greenwood

German Player—Rex A. Martin

Neutral Commentator—Ken Whitesell

By the way of introduction, Don Greenwood is the developer of UP FRONT and Rex Martin was the main playtester during that development. Ken Whitesell won the UP FRONT tournament at ORIGINS 83 (which brought him round-trip airfare to ORIGINS 84 in Dallas). So, we are certainly blessed with plenty of expertise at all positions for this replay and it should be instructive to those new to this unique game.

Pre-game

German: In case the reader does not know as yet, UP FRONT is a card game. And, being a card game, I inevitably apply the precepts of good card play (I've played cards ever since I can remember, learning at the knee of my grandfather and father the ruthless play of *Gin* and *Pitch*). This, mixed with a touch of tactical expertise, is the essence of the game. Two of these precepts dominate any hand of UP FRONT.

First, the experienced player will maximize the flow of cards through his hand and/or through the deck. For the German player, this is fairly easy, since he enjoys the capability of discarding each turn. At least half of any claim to skill in this game depends on bringing cards into your hand in sufficient numbers to keep your options open. There are the obvious instances of this when one is frantically searching the deck for that vital card to help one out of a tough spot. Less obvious is discarding potentially useful Fire and Terrain cards, low value Concealment or Rally cards, simply to see what comes to one. For each nationality, given my strategy for the scenario in play, I've an "optimum hand"; unless I am sitting with such a "pat hand", I will discard the least useful in striving to find that collection (much as one does when playing a fast-moving game of *Gin*).

Secondly, one must make effective use of the cards one does have to work with. This game punishes those unable to think on their feet and adapt the play to what they currently hold (this demands one be very aware of *all* the possibilities of each card in your hand and potential reactions by your opponent to the play of that card). Rarely does one commit himself irrevocably to a course of action for the remainder of the scenario. Obviously a good player will tailor his play to his strong "suit"—for instance, a strategy of movement demands terrain, concealment and multiple movement cards. But he must be able to realize when to switch tactics; this may be brought on by a shift in the cards coming his way in the draw or by the situation on the table. These decision points are often fleeting. This is an unforgiving game, and the delay of but one turn may bring you to grief and place you in a position from where you cannot recover regardless of how good your luck is.

Finally, when one has become a solid player of UP FRONT, other card playing skills come into play—notably the ability to "card count". Be aware of certain cards revealed in the course of play. This will allow you, if familiar with the numbers of each type, to have some awareness of certain actions that may be attempted without certain risks attendant. The most obvious case of this is to keep track of those terrain types that hinder

movement—Marsh, Stream, Wire, etc. Too, Sniper and Breeze cards are readily remembered. And the specialized Movement cards (Flank, Ford, Retreat). This may be a small point, but it sets apart the master player from the good player. While the luck inherent in this game may not be bent to serve your purposes, at least you can use the information it reveals to judge the odds of your actions succeeding.

As usual, in this hand I start at a distinct disadvantage. Don and I have played this scenario so often (in all its many versions) during the playtest of UP FRONT that he is well aware that I favor a large firebase with which to play for a quick win. And, occasionally, his concentration on that firegroup frees my other four-man element for a chance at winning by the victory conditions or on action points. Hence, his play of a Marsh freezes my firebase (which I like to place entrenched on a hill) for several turns and, effectively, my maneuver group as well. (In this scenario, I never move my secondary group without fire cover unless in desperate straits—a fact he well knows.) I will therefore be forced to shift the firebase twice, utilizing the two Movement cards I have. Worse, his firebase is in the best position possible. However, nothing will happen until my firebase is safely ensconced. Don is, if anything, an overly cautious card player; so I doubt that he will take advantage of this awkwardness with any untoward moves. And the range is a bit long for any effective fire. If anything, he will play defensively.

American: I will forego a general discourse on strategy—having waxed prolific on the subject elsewhere in this issue. Instead, I'll confine my comments to the situation at hand as dictated by the cards in play. Generally, when playing this scenario with Rex, I've tended towards conservatism and prefer to play in a slug-it-out style relying on the American's superior firepower from a eight- or ten-man group. However, as that tends to take longer and I don't fancy recording this game through three decks, I'm going to opt for a more daring mobile strategy which the Americans are generally ill-suited for due to their low morale and lessened movement capability. Perhaps the surprise factor will buy me the few turns I need to get off to a good start. By setting up in three groups, rather than two, my maneuver group gets to begin as C and is just a movement card away from D, thereby increasing the range from the German firebase B. An effective early attack or delaying terrain coupled with a generous supply of Movement cards will enable me to start an end run which could bring about an early conclusion.

The initial deal has been most kind. I have not only a Marsh card to hinder his fire and delay any reaction to my lateral movement, but I also have a Hill for my firebase and a usable Fire card to use from that hill. Now if only I had a Movement card, my starting hand would be excellent.

Drat! Although he had no terrain to foil my plans, I filled my hand with what amounts to Cover cards. Although the on-board position is excellent, I will start the game with no movement and a hand that is half worthless.

In UP FRONT the initial setup is probably the most crucial part of the game, since it is the only part that the player has complete control over. I have broken down my pre-game commentary into two parts. First—I cover both sides initial placement; and second, the situation after the deal.

GERMAN: In Scenario A, the German player sets up first. This is both an advantage and a disadvantage. The disadvantage is obvious; the German player must set up with little or no idea of how his opponent will respond. The advantage is not so obvious, and this is that the German player can somewhat influence the setup of his opponent. If the German starts with a firepower-based setup, then the American player should respond in kind. Otherwise, the American player is taking a chance on getting "better" cards during the course of the game.

Here the German player has used a firepower-based setup. The firepower Rex's "kill" group will generate at each range is: (Range 0 through 5) 4, 9, 10, 15, 16, 22. The firepower his other group can generate is: 0, 3, 3, 7, 9, 14. This is a good, balanced setup. However, the low average morale of the "maneuver" group will force Rex to be cautious in using it. I would suggest not trying for a positional victory (getting four men to Range 4), but to play to break the American squad.

AMERICAN: The American has the advantage in that he can (and must) react to the German setup. This is where I feel that Don has possibly made a mistake. When facing firepower-based setups, the only adequate solution I've found is to oppose it with more firepower. Don has a six-man fire group; but, comparing it to the German's kill group, it comes up short. First, the average morale in the German group is a full point higher than that of the American group. Second, the American's firepower is: 2, 7, 7, 13, 15, 22. This yields a difference of -2, -2, -3, -2, -1, 0. This difference, combined with the lower morale, will definitely be felt by the American player. I feel, then, that the American player will have to run for a quick terrain victory, since his kill group has little chance of standing up to the Germans in a protracted firefight.

After the deal, Don seems to have received the better terrain. Starting a kill group on a hill, with Rex's bogged in a marsh, is almost an ideal situation. However, Rex has almost the perfect hand for this situation. His two Movement cards, along with the two Concealment cards, will allow him to move out of the Marsh in relative safety.

Turn 1

German: I've no choice in the circumstances. Let's see how my luck (which Don claims is phenomenal) holds and open with the lateral move of my firebase. Since I've nothing better to do with Group A, I'll simply entrench it. I clear a card from the deck and may even give it some protection. My discard is fairly obvious I would expect, even to novices.

American: There is no point in firing now; he must play another Movement card to get out of the marsh—at which point I will get to add two to my attack for his movement. Equally important, I need to dis-

card two cards to get something valuable in my hand instead of all this junk.

The German player makes about the only move available. The American player, however, has an interesting decision to make. Should he fire now, or wait for the enemy group to clear the marsh? If Don fires now, it would be a Fire 2 (Fire 1 card, +1 hill, +1 enemy moving, -1 marsh). It would also use the only good card in an otherwise poor hand. However, using it now might also lead the German to believe that there is more where that came from and persuade him to make that second move lateral. If he waits to fire, he can discard two cards, hoping to improve his hand, and possibly generate more effective fire later. If Rex moves forward and this is the only Fire card capable of being used, then the attack would be a Fire 4 (Fire 1 card, +1 hill, +2 enemy moving). Given the current condition of Don's hand, I agree with his decision to wait. However, if he had even a marginally better hand, I would say fire and hope to pin the enemy down in the marsh.

Turn 2

German: Since he has discarded, he is playing as cautiously as I expected, looking to fill himself a pat hand or merely searching for a worthwhile Fire card. With the Concealment cards and a fine Rally card now in my hand, there is no reason not to push my luck and dash forward in search of a terrain card. Group B moves into danger. However, I am loath to discard anything, even though this limits my chances of finding a terrain card; all of those in my hand have an excellent use to be put to at this stage of the game.

American: I would prefer to move rather than entrench, but have no Movement cards. My discards on Turn 1 were replaced by more unusable garbage, so I would prefer to discard now but can't pass up the +3 shot on his group coming out of the marsh. With this hand, it may be my only chance to hurt him for quite awhile.

The German player now has his own decision to make. Move forward, or lateral? The -3 Concealment card will negate the movement and terrain effects, so any attack would be resolved at the strength printed on the Fire card(s). The worst possible attack with a single card would be a Fire 4 (7). The best situation for Rex, of course, would be for Don not to have any fire cards. I would figure on an attack of strength 2. That would mean about a 2% chance of a KIA. Anything less isn't a problem since Rex holds a R5 card. So, the decision is made to spring forward. Good move. Don then unleashes his fire attack. The F1 on Group B cannot kill, and doesn't even pin anyone.

Turn 3

German: His fire is as ineffective as I expected, my Concealment -3 card saving me from trouble. This range, even with his BAR, is simply too great for the Americans to bother me much. I'll keep them up for another turn, discard the middling-fair Fire card as the most expendable in my hand, and seek terrain. In point of fact, this is not as risky as it may appear, given the Concealment card and morale of the exposed targets. It is a chance worth the taking.

American: So much for my initial advantage. No move, no fire—I can only discard. I can't even afford to entrench, although given my setup that would be a poor choice anyway. I need some usable cards, especially Movement cards, even though my original strategy has lost all of its lustre already.

Between his good Concealment and Rally cards, and Don's failure to show any potent fire last turn, it's not much of a chance that Rex is taking. He is relatively safe this turn. Don can do nothing but discard.

Turn 4

German: His third turn discard indicates that he is in poor shape—or else in a defensive stance. However, with that, the potential for a fire attack on me has just gone up dramatically. As much as I hate to do so, I've got to go to ground in the Open. If broken on the next turn, and unable to draw terrain to shelter in, and having used my Concealment card to little effect other than offset the movement penalties, I could simply give this hand up as a bad deal. In other words, a bad draw at the end of my turn (no terrain and no Concealment) and the potential exists for a deadly exchange of fire with my firebase on the losing end.

American: Nothing has changed with regard to my position. I have no usable cards. The fact that he has gone to ground in the open suggests fire coming my way this turn and I would attempt entrenchment normally while I can if my hand wasn't so worthless. I would entrench anyway if success could be guaranteed; but of course it can't. I will merely discard again.

I agree with Rex. The longer he stays moving, the better chance Don has to do some serious damage. Unknown to Rex, however, Don's hand still looks like trash from the offensive standpoint.

Turn 5

German: God, so many discards—he must be getting a pat hand. I must draw some of the sting of that hill-based firegroup. Hence the desperate attack, looking for a touch of luck. Too, it clears two cards from my hand, allowing me to retain the good cards I've got and still draw two (which I consider to be the optimum draw for the German player with two mutually supporting groups). And luck does come my way, with my attack pinning two of his men; his Concealment is a wasted effort. This effectively ties them up for a turn (while he rallys them)—and prevents the dreaded entrenchment on a hilltop for one turn at least.

American: Played the C1 to avoid possibility of a KIA on his fire attack as well as to draw another card, but he still pinned two men. Although it comes later than I like, I might as well play the Movement card as a Lateral Group Transfer because I need to play a Rally on Group B anyway.

Now it's time for Rex to attack. The attack is a Fire 1 (Fire 1 card + Fire 2 card, -1 hill, -1 concealment). Even though it is the same strength as Don's earlier attack, this one has a better chance of pinning someone due to the American's lower average morale. This chance comes out to be about 8% per man, or overall about a 20% better chance of pinning at least one. The attack succeeds in pinning two men, in fact. Don goes ahead and moves Group C to try to spread the Germans out some. If the German follows, I would suggest moving two more men into Group A. That could really put Rex into a bind. Having two groups separated such that one group cannot effectively cover both could force the German to split up his firegroup.

Turn 6

German: He's getting fancy now. By moving to outmaneuver me, he has placed me on the horns of a dilemma. If I simply ignore him, he may slip past to win on the Victory Conditions of the scenario. But do I risk the fire that might come by shifting to block his move? Do I sit tight and play for the terrain that allows me to close the range while he is thus occupied? Do I seek to maximize my defense and make him come to me? Actually, the more I consider the situation, I can perhaps turn this master stroke of his back on him by endangering his hilltop firebase. After all, I certainly won't be sacrificing good positions by moving. And, if I'm to effectively threaten his hilltop group, I must

move both mine. This forces him to make a decision with his upcoming fire—which of my moving groups is the most proximate threat and the juiciest target? German Group A is a “stalking horse”, seeking to draw fire away from my Group B that is the key to the strategy I am now committed to—a short, violent firefight between our main groups at long-range. I will be seeking an advantage which will lead to bringing maximum fire to bear; in other words, I need to flank his hilltop with my firebase. Unfortunately, I must use the Flank Move card in my hand to effect a Lateral Transfer for one of my groups since I cannot sacrifice my Ford Movement card. A stream which hangs me up for more than a turn would put paid to all my calculations. I must trust to luck to find another Flank Movement card. By my count, there are more still available in the deck.

American: He follows my lateral transfer with two of his own. Too bad I have no fire cards to hamper or delay him, but maybe it upsets his plans. I could use yet another discard to rid myself of these high Fire cards which seem to be attracted to my hand, but dropping into the Gully and entrenching on the hill are also important—especially with no Movement cards in my hand. That's all I need—to find a Stream with Group D.

Rex decided to move out and follow Don. One thing Rex did not mention: he had to move both groups out if he wanted to eventually flank with the German Group B, since in order to flank an enemy group you must have a group directly opposite the group you want to flank. I disagree with his decision to use the Flank card. Any Movement card has a 50% chance of being able to ford a stream, and there is the strong chance of drawing another ford card. A Flank card can only be replaced by another Flank card, and there is the possibility of not seeing one for awhile. Don does all he can do in this situation, although I think that discarding would have also been appropriate at this time. It's rare to see a hand so filled with trash as his has consistently been.

Turn 7

German: In short, I need the Flank card. With one enemy group in the Gully, and the others entrenching, I think he is short of Fire cards or he would have opened up on me last turn. So . . . I go to the Open to clear one card and rid myself of the movement penalty, and discard the Building to clear the other. I want to hang onto my other cards. My “stalking horse” remains up to entice any fire away from my firebase.

American: His SL and quality troops are in Group C now, so that is the obvious target for my sniper. I need to draw usable Fire or delay cards now while he is in the open.

Rex needs that Flank card now. Once he grounds his kill group, he will only be able to pass one card at a time through his hand unless he gets a good action card. Don's sniper succeeds in pinning Bernhoff; a sure sign, perhaps, of better things to come.

Turn 8

German: Ah-ha! Don continues to draw, and I've my Flank card ready sooner than hoped for! Unfortunately, his damn Sniper has picked off one man at the worst possible moment. I do not care to risk the loss of anyone in the group, and must rally anyway to pull my master stroke. But, to entice any fire away from my critical group, I'm going to sacrifice Group A. Hence, a Forward Move with them, sending them to their death.

American: I would rather discard, but his move is too good to allow to pass even though it brings me only one fresh card as a replacement.

Rex gets his Flank card, rallies the pinned man, and moves the other group forward. Don has a choice. Fire 6 (Fire 3 card, +1 hill, +2 enemy moving) or a Fire 4 (same as above, except enemy not moving). Don makes a good choice, hitting the immediate threat. It works too, killing the ASL and pinning two others. Time to hope for a good draw.

Turn 9

German: Group A has served its purpose at the cost of my ASL, so they go to ground (stripping a Cower card in the process) and becoming Group B as they complete their Lateral Transfer finally. And, declaring the flank versus the American hill position, Group C moves. Now Don faces a definite choice. Does he abandon the hilltop yet; or hope for a few more turns of fire, seeking to kill off Group B and rid himself of the flank in that manner; or try to gain the +50% casualties for a win? If he moves, this will be a very close run hand; if he stays, I think I've the advantage. After all, I'll have the potential of placing some 18 FP there; even his benefits would not save him from impressive losses.

American: With no Fire or Move cards, a discard is dictated. His flanking move on B is serious, but I have no Movement card with which to counter it. All I can do is discard and hope my sniper takes out the German LMG, while I hope to draw a Movement card to get out of this flanked position.

Don has a bit of a problem. His kill group is flanked, and he has no Movement or Fire cards. He has to start passing cards through his hand, even if it forces him to hold an action back for a turn. Except, of course, an action that would remove the flank. Any Fire card he gets, should now be used on the bigger, more dangerous enemy fire group. If he

manages to eliminate the smaller group, he would get an extra card for his hand, giving him seven cards instead of six. This is a relatively small improvement, since he can only manage to use about two each turn anyway. More importantly however, it would break the flank. But, if he manages to get the German SL in the big group, the German player would only have a four-card hand, instead of five. Not only is this a larger relative difference, but anyone who has played the Russians knows that a four-card hand is frustrating to play. Therefore, I feel that any American fire opportunity should be used on the German kill group. One of Don's discards is a Sniper, and it succeeds again in pinning a German in the German firebase.

Turn 10

German: Another sniper pins Wolff! But my usual luck has brought me a Hero card at the most opportune moment. Unfortunately, I can't seem to find a piece of terrain—the cross I must bear in this hand. (There seems to be one such in every hand. That's what makes the game so fascinating to me: dealing with the vagaries of the draw.) So, again I go to the Open, figuring to place Smoke next turn unless I can hit him with a massive fire attack. At least I can reply with my own Sniper, removing that threat for the remainder of this deck. And a three-card draw may well bring me some firepower.

American: I'd like to Sniper Check his 0 Sniper

GERMAN

Group A is composed of, in order, #5—#8—#7—#2
Group B is composed of, in order, #9—#4—#6—#10—#3—#1

Turn	Group A	Group B	Hand	Action	Discard
	Range/Terrain/Position		1/2/3/4/5	A/B	
#1	0/Op/ 2-2-1-4A	0/Ma/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC	M/M/C3/C2/F5 ¹⁴	EN/ML	F5 ¹⁴
#2	0/OpEn/ 2-2-1-4A	0/Ma/ML 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC	M/R5/C3/C2/F2 ³	—/MF	—
#3	0/OpEn/ 2-2-1-4A	1/Op/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC	F2 ⁷ /R5/C3/C2/F2 ³	—/—	F2 ⁷
#4	0/OpEn/ 2-2-1-4A	1/Op/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC	MFo/R5/MFo/C2/F2 ³	—/Op	—
#5	0/OpEn/ 2-2-1-4A	1/Op/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC	MFo/R5/F1 ² /C2/F2 ³	—/F1-B	—
#6	0/OpEn/ 2-2-1-4A	1/Op/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC	MFo/R5/MFl/C2/M	ML/ML	—
#7	0/Op/ML 2-2-1-4A	1/Op/ML 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC	MFo/R5/M/C2/Bu ³	—/Op	Bu ³

German Group B, now read Group C with lateral group transfer.

#8	0/Op/ML/- MF 2-2-1-4A	1/Op/ 3-3-P-4-3L-5SC	MFo/R5/MFl/C2/F6 ¹⁴	M/R5	F6 ¹⁴
#9	1/Op/ P-P-1	1/Op/MFl 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC	He/Cw/MFl/C2/F1 ³	Op/ML	F1 ³

German Group A, now read Group B with lateral group transfer.

#10	1/Op/ P-P-1	1/Op/ 3-3-5-P-3L-5SC	He/M/Sm/C1/Sn	—/He,Op	Sn
#11	1/Op/ P-P-1	1/Op/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC	Br/Hi/Sm/C1/F2 ²	—/Sm	Br
#12	1/Op/ P-P-1	1/OpSm/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC	Br/Hi/F8 ¹² /C1/F2 ²	—/F4-B	Br
#13	1/Op/ P-P-1	1/Op/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC	Bu ³ /Hi/F2 ¹ /C1/F2 ²	—/F4-D	Bu ³
#14	1/Op/ P-P-1	1/Op/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC	F4 ⁹ /Hi/F2 ⁸ /C1/F3 ⁸	—/F6-D	—
#15	1/Op/ P-1	1/Op/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC	Ma/Hi/F1 ⁴ /C1/F3 ⁸	—/F2-B	F1 ⁴
#16	1/Op/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC		Ma/Hi/Wi/C1/F3 ³	F1-B	Wi
#17	1/Op/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC		Ma/Hi/W/C1/F5 ¹⁰	F4-B	Wa
#18	1/Op/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC		Ma/Hi/Bu ² /C1/M	ML	Bu ⁶
#19	1/Op/ML 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC		Ma/Hi/F6 ¹³ /C1/F7 ¹⁵	Hi	—
#20	1/Hi/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC		Ma/F5 ¹² /F6 ¹³ /C1/F7 ¹⁵	F4-D	—
#21	1/Hi/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC		Ma/F5 ¹² /F6 ¹³ /F6 ¹⁸ /F2 ⁴	F3-D	Ma
#22	1/Hi/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC		He/F5 ¹² /F1 ¹ /F6 ¹⁸ /F2 ⁴	F3-B	—
#23	1/Hi/ 3-3-5-4-3L-5SC		He/F5 ¹² /F2 ⁵ /F6 ¹⁸ /C1	F4-D	—

AMERICAN CONCEDES VICTORY ON HIS TURN #23.

Abbreviations:	
Terrain: Br	= Brush
Bg ²	= Building -2
Bg ³	= Building -3
Gu	= Gully
En	= Entrenched
Fl	= Flanked
Hi	= Hill
Ma	= Marsh
Sm	= Smoke
St	= Stream
Wa	= Wall
Wi	= Wire
Wo	= Woods
Op	= Open
Positions: #	= Morale, Good Order
A	= ASL
C	= Crew
I	= Infiltrator
L	= LMG
B	= BAR
M	= Malfunction
P	= Pinned
S	= SL
T	= Transfer
U	= Unarmed
W	= Wounded
Cards: C#	= Concealed, Value
Cw	= Cower
F# ^c	= Fire, Strength with Requisite FP as exponent
HE	= Hero
M	= Movement
MFo	= Movement, Ford
MFl	= Movement, Flank
R#	= Rally
Sn	= Sniper
Actions: AA	= Weapon Acquisition
CC	= Close Combat
EN	= Entrench
IN	= Infiltrate
ML/F/R	= Movement Lateral/Forward/Retreat
TM	= Temporary Movement
RE	= Repair
SC	= Sniper Check
F#-T	= Fire Attack, Modified Strength—Target
—	= No Action
(Note: lower case type indicates failed attempt.)	

result, but with no Move or Fire cards I must discard to maximise the card flow through my hand—especially with Group B in danger.

Rex is again forced to ground his troops. Now, if Don only had a Fire card . . .

Turn 11

German: He's held his fire. And I've nothing to punish him with, so down goes the Smoke. My Brush is sacrificed for the hopes of massive Fire cards; I've no plans on moving again for awhile anyway. All I need do is pray that Group B survives to allow me a few turns of flanking fire.

American: Should Group B move off the hill with no terrain to move into a Gully, which would leave me with no fire on his groups? Efficient play of cards says yes—but if I do, I lose my only source of fire against his pinned and exposed groups. I'll stay and trust to his smoke and my entrenchment and Rally cards to protect me from his flanking fire—at least until I have better terrain to move into.

Rex uses the Smoke to provide himself with some protection. But more importantly, it passes another card out of his hand. This gives him a two card draw, hoping to get a large Fire card.

Should Don move off the hill? Even without terrain, I feel the answer is YES. Sitting and accepting

a possibly lethal attack, when something can be done to prevent it, is depending too much on luck. With 18 firepower factors available for an attack, any single Fire card can be used, with most two-card combinations available too. I agree with moving Group D forward, but I would also move Group B sideways. Not as a Lateral Group Transfer, just a card played sideways to remove the flank. It would also use two cards—two more chances at improving a poor hand.

Turn 12

German: My play of the smoke seems to have lulled Don. He is apparently under the impression that the –3 is going to save his Group B from punishment.

AMERICAN

Group A is composed of, in order, #6—#10

Group B is composed of, in order, #5—#4—#12—#8—#3—#2

Group C is composed of, in order, #9—#7—#11—#1

Turn	Group A	Group B	Group C	Hand	Action	Discard
#1	0/Op/ 1-1	0/Hi/ 3-3-2-2-4B-3A	0/Op/ 5-3-3-4S	1/2/3/4/5/6 Cw/F1'/F6 ¹⁷ /F7 ¹⁷ /Cl/RS	—/—/—	F7 ¹⁷ /Cw
#2	0/Op/ 1-1	0/Hi/ 3-3-2-2-4B-3A	0/Op/ 5-3-3-4S	F5 ¹¹ /F1'/F6 ¹⁷ /Cw/Cl/RS	en/F1-B/en	—/—
#3	0/Op/ 1-1	0/Hi/ 3-3-2-2-4B-3A	0/Op/ 5-3-3-4S	F5 ¹¹ /Cl/F6 ¹⁷ /Cw/Cl/RS	—/—/—	Cw/F6 ¹⁷
#4	0/Op/ 1-1	0/Hi/ 3-3-2-2-4B-3A	0/Op/ 5-3-3-4S	F5 ¹¹ /Cl/Gu/F5 ¹⁵ /Cl/RS	—/—/—	F5 ¹¹ /F5 ¹⁵
#5	0/Op/ 1-1	0/Hi/ 3-3-2-P-4B-P	0/Op/ 5-3-3-4S	F6 ¹⁵ /Gu/M/Cl/RS	en/R5/ML	—/—
#6	0/Op/ 1-1	0/Hi/ 3-3-2-2-4B-3A	0/Op/ML 5-3-3-4S	F6 ¹⁵ /Sn/Gu/R4/Cl/F7	en/EN/Gu	—/—

American Group C, now read Group D with lateral group transfer

#7	0/Op/ 1-1	0/HiEn/ 3-3-2-2-4B-3A	0/Gu/ 5-3-3-4S	F6 ¹⁵ /Sn/Gu/R4/Cl/F7 ¹⁶	—/—/—	Sn/F7 ¹⁶
#8	0/Op/ 1-1	0/HiEn/ 3-3-2-2-4B-3A	0/Gu/ 5-3-3-4S	F6 ¹⁵ /F3 ⁷ /Gu/R4/Cl/Sn	en/F3-B/—	—/—
#9	0/Op/ 1-1	0/HiEnFl/ 3-3-2-2-4B-3A	0/Gu/ 5-3-3-4S	F6 ¹⁵ /R1/Gu/R4/Cl/Sh	—/—/—	F6 ¹⁵ /Sn
#10	0/Op/ 1-1	0/HiEnFl/ 3-3-2-2-4B-3A	0/Gu/ 5-3-3-4S	RA/R1/Gu/R4/Cl/Cw	—/—/—	R1/Cw
#11	0/Op/ 1-1	0/HiEnFl/ 3-3-2-2-4B-3A	0/Gu/ 5-3-3-4S	RA/M/Gu/R4/Cl/M	en/—/MF	—/—
#12	0/Op/ 1-1	0/HiEnFl/ P-P-P-P-3A	1/Br/ 5-3-3-4S	RA/R2/Gu/R4/ /M	EN/R4/MF	—/—
#13	0/OpEn/ 1-1	0/HiEnFl/ 3-3-2-2-4B-3A	2/Br/MF 5-P-P-P	RA/R2/Gu/Bu ³ /RI/M	—/MF/RA	—/—
#14	0/OpEn/ 1-1	1/Hi/MF 3-3-2-2-4B-3A	2/Br/MF P-P-P	F1'/R2/Gu/Bu ³ /RI/M	F1-B/Br/Gu	—/—
#15	0/OpEn/ 1-1	1/Br/ 3-2-4B-P	2/Gu/ P-P-P	F2 ³ /R2/M/Bu ³ /RI/	—/F2-B/R2	—/—
#16	0/OpEn/ 1-1	1/BrWi/ P-P-4B-P	2/Gu/ P-3-4S	F4 ¹² /F3 ⁴ /M/Cl/Bu ³ /RI/F6 ¹⁸	—/—/—	F4 ¹² /F6 ¹⁸
#17	0/OpEn/ 1-1	1/BrWi/ P-P-P	2/Gu/ P-3-4S	Bu ³ /F3 ⁴ /M/Bu ² /Bu ³ /RI/Wa	—/—/—	Bu ³ /Wa
#18	0/OpEn/ 1-1	1/BrWi/ P-P-P	2/Gu/ P-3-4S	C2/F3 ⁴ /M/Bu ³ /RI/R4/Bu ²	—R4/R1	—/—
#19	0/OpEn/ 1-1	1/BrWi/ 3-4B-3A	2/Gu/ 3-3-4S	C2/F3 ⁴ /M/Bu ³ /R3/Gu/Bu ²	—/TM/F3-C	—/—
#20	0/OpEn/ 1-1	1/Br/ 3-4B-3A	2/Gu/ P-P-P	C2/MFo/C2/Bu ³ /R3/Gu/Bu ²	—/MF/R3	—/—
#21	0/OpEn/ 1-1	1/Br/ML 3-4B-3A	2/Gu/ P-3-P	/C1/F8 ¹⁸ /Bu ³ /F5 ¹⁵ /Gu/Bu ²	—/—/—	F8 ¹⁸ /F5 ¹⁵
#22	0/OpEn/ 1-1	1/Br/ML 3-4B-3A	2/Gu/ P-3-P	/F3 ⁷ /Cl/Bu ³ /M/Gu/Bu ²	—/—/—	Bu ³ /Gu
#23	0/OpEn/ 1-1	1/Br/ML 3-4B-3A	2/Gu/ P-P	Wo/F37/ /Bu ³ /M/F2 ² /Br	CONCEDE VICTORY	

He's gambled that I've no fire cards—he lost. Unfortunately, my Fire 8 is severely reduced, but manages to pin him to that killing ground on the hilltop as I expected. The Breeze on the third card could not have been better timed, bringing a KIA on his fourth man. My play is fairly straightforward now, given average luck on the draw. I'll be curious to see what he tries, especially with his good-morale group moving out of their hole. I think I'll help them out to where I can get a shot by discarding my Brush on them.

American: He kills one and pins three with a F8 despite my C1 due to a fortuitous Breeze blowing his smoke away. Obviously I made the wrong decision and should have moved off the hill. No sense crying about it now—let's hope he hasn't got another F8 card because I have to sit and bear it while I rally Group B. As he has no shortage of targets, I might as well offer him one more, accept his Brush discard and move Group D forward so as to use a second card out of my hand and allow a two-card refill draw.

That attack, a Fire 4 (Fire 8 card, -1 hill, -1 entrenched, -1 concealment, -1 smoke) had at least a 50% chance of killing one man, and a 50% chance of pinning at least four others in addition to the KIA. Don, in moving his maneuver group, has bought time for his kill group. This places his SL in danger, though given the situation there is little else he can do. He must rally his Group B and by moving forward he expects to get both better cover for his maneuver group with his Gully card and maximizes his card draw.

Turn 13

German: An interesting choice I have here: are two 0 attacks (one from each of my groups) on his center group better than a single +2? That depends, I think on what I'm looking for. A single +2 attack usually gives a middling chance of breaking a fair number of his troops; but, if one is looking for routs, two 0 attacks on an average group (as the American Group B is) raises the possibility of routing those low-morale characters without him having the chance of rallying them. Of course, then there is his maneuver group. Group D breaks to the open to draw some fire. Timed with the rallying of his hilltop group, this is an excellent ploy. His sacrifice is accepted. My fire smacks his group moving from the Brush and brings that to a halt. Equally important, the breaking of his SL forces him into terrain or to rally, and gives me yet another shot on them.

American: His F4 on D pins three men, including my SL so I have to rally them or lose a card from my hand capacity. No wonder I can't fire—he has all the bullets. But how many more can he have? I feel I must use this opportunity to move off the hill and rid myself of his flanking fire while I still can; so I'll move off the hill now and save the Gully for whichever group gets into trouble. How many bullets can he have?

Rex's attack on Group D is a Fire 4 (Fire 2 card + Fire 2 card, +1 enemy moving, -1 brush). This gives a 35% chance of at least one KIA, and a 50% chance of at least two pins. No kills and three pins can be considered about average. Because one of the pinned men is his SL, Don rallies Group D. I totally disagree with this action. By leaving the group moving, Rex can fire at the group again next turn. If he uses the Gully, Group D cannot be fired on next turn and they can be rallied safely.

Turn 14

German: Well, he finally clears that flank. But my attention is now on the exposed SL. The massive firepower I can bring to bear demolishes any hope that he may have of using this group to win. His Group A can be discounted. Thus, I'm back to con-

centrating on his largest group.

American: Now an F6 on D pins three and kills one. I'll use the Gully to get Group D out of LOS and drop Group B into brush. Too bad the buildings are not yet a valid terrain feature. Just my luck to run into a German squad guarding an ammo truck as my opponent. When is he going to run out of Fire cards? I'll use my tremendous Fire 1 attack just to use Group A for something and increase my card draw. His Group C is the better target, as I need relief from his firebase, but my Group A is out of range of that one so I'll have to settle for attacking his beat-up group as better than nothing.

Another attack, this time a Fire 6 (Fire 4 card + Fire 2 card, +1 enemy moving, -1 brush). This has a 69% chance of at least one kill, and a 73% chance of at least three pins! The attack does succeed in killing one and pinning the rest. Don drops Group D into the gully, making them immune to any possibility of incoming fire (unless Rex moves a group onto a hill). He also fires into Group B, forcing the removal of one man due to panic.

Turn 15

German: His movement forward has brought him to grief—the death of one trooper and the breaking of his SL. With his other group cowering in the gully, I've nothing else to occupy me.

American: A F2 on Group B pins the ASL. I'm not rallying Moores as I feel the attack on his Group B is more important. My attack is too small to do much damage to his high morale firebase—I think I'm better off trying to eliminate the weak group and gain an extra card. If I can wipe out Group B now while they are more vulnerable, the extra card bonus may compensate for some of the damage done so far. The ASL will have to take his chances.

The two sides trade Fire 2 attacks, with each side killing one and pinning one. Even though Don did succeed in removing enemy Group B, the extra card isn't going to do him much good when most of his squad is pinned.

Turn 16

German: My "stalking horse" has continued to draw his attention. I think he has erred; he should divine that I've had no interest in them and have been dangling them before him in the hopes of gaining a couple of more turns of unimpeded fire. So, with two broken by my fire, I'll keep him there for a prime target by dropping Wire on his group.

American: I lucked out in eliminating his Group B so fast, but I'd gladly trade that for him running out of ammunition! Used C1 on the F1 on Group B, but he still pins two more. When is he going to run out of bullets? I finally have a decent Fire card and can't use it for lack of even four firepower. I would rally one man in B or D but that would reduce my card flow to one. I must discard in hopes of drawing a big Rally card or at least a Concealment or low Fire card.

Rex has a Fire 1 attack (Fire 3 card, -1 brush, -1 concealment). Two men pinned is slightly better than an average result for this attack. Don now has a real problem. A hand full of trash, a group in Wire with three men pinned, and a group hiding in a gully. The group in the gully will be at least three turns from joining the action (rally-move-terrain). Don does the best with what he has. He needs good cards, and he needs them now.

Turn 17

German: I've got to play hard and fast now, with but one group to hold him off. Once again I'll work his middle group over. At this point, I virtually can't help but hurt him. The Wall goes in the hope of bringing me another large Fire card—or even not so large.

American: And a F5 kills one and pins one! Is there no end to his Fire cards? I must discard in search of a big Rally card—not that I have any other choices. If he keeps drawing Fire cards, I have no chance.

Rex's Fire 5 attack (Fire 5 card, -1 brush, +1 wire) yields average results in killing one and pinning one. Don finally gets a Rally 4 card for his battered Group B. He also rallies Group D. Things are not looking good for Don right now. He no longer has a group that is capable of winning by getting to Range 4. He also lacks a fire group that can do any serious damage. Rex has him down, and with Don's hand it appears to be only a matter of time before Don is finished.

Turn 18

German: Well . . . all good things come to an end. But, I've been hoping to get onto a Hill; now's my chance. With him in such a state, he will hardly trouble about my lateral shift. Too, I've one Marsh and the others have gone by, likewise the Streams; so I needn't fear his discard overly. Now, a choice to be made: do I discard that fifth building and give him the advantage of moving into buildings (Don invariably holds these buildings close)?

American: He finally runs out of Fire cards! Now if I can get some Movement cards to move into my Buildings, this may not be over yet. I need a big break and the right cards, but it is still possible. With my Building cards I can still recombine B and D into a decent firebase, if I get the Movement cards I need.

Don finally gets the opportunity to rally his men, as Rex prepares to occupy a hill. If I were in Don's position right now, I would move Group D backwards, then use Lateral Group Transfer to recreate Group C. From there I would then use individual transfers to reinforce Group B. I realize I'm talking about five or six Movement cards, but I can't see any logic behind sitting there and being chopped up by superior firepower.

Turn 19

German: Onto the hilltop, with Fire cards that I can use. No point in discarding, I've all I could ask for at this point given my strategy in this particular hand.

American: Oh great! Onto a hill; if he has the kind of Fire cards he's had in the past, I'm dead. This attack must do some damage to gain me some respite, and I must draw Movement or Fire cards.

I disagree with Rex here. I feel he should discard the Marsh. With the Fire cards he already has, he can almost guarantee that Don will not be using any Movement cards. Don, meanwhile, is looking for a miracle. His Fire 1 attack (Fire 3 card, -1 hill, -1 concealment) yields nothing.

Turn 20

German: His fire is ineffectual, my Concealment card serving the purpose that it was intended for. Now the heavy fire comes down like a hammer. The group in the Gully is vulnerable; I'll flush him from there. I should be able to run him out of Rally cards; the KIAs follow shortly thereafter. This is standard practice given the current situation. No finesse now, merely blood.

American: His F4 attack pins all three men of Group D. I must hope to get B to Range 2 in a Building and transfer men into it from Group D, all of which will require many Move cards and a respite from his never-ending supply of Fire cards.

Rex's Fire 4 attack (Fire 7 card, -2 gully, -2 concealment, +1 hill) gives average results. I agree with Rex here. No finesse, just keep pounding. Don advances Group B, in what appears to be an attempt to give Rex more targets than he can shoot.

Turn 21

German: His move of Group B is not enough to distract me from the damage I can do. Concentration on the SL will bring him grief—forcing him to rally him as often as I break him. Rally cards should be at a premium in his hand soon. And the other group—moving—draws a Marsh from me.

American: My C2 on the F6 saves Group D from yet another major attack, although two men are pinned. I must reject the Marsh and return to Range Chit 1. Now with pinned men, I can't even move into a Building because I must maximize my card draw in search of a rally card—especially with my SL pinned and my hand capacity reduced.

Rex chooses a Fire 3 attack at Group D (Fire 6 card, +1 hill, -2 gully, -2 concealment) over a Fire 5 attack at Group B (Fire card 6, +1 hill, +1 enemy moving, -1 brush, -2 concealment). Not knowing what concealment Don would have, Rex would have been looking at either a Fire 5 on Group D, or a Fire 7 on Group B. The possibility of three quick kills would have been enough to convince me to attack Group B. Rex only needs three KIAs (or routs) to win. Removal of either Group B, or D, would break the American—and the easiest way to do it would be with the largest fire attacks. Don is in bad shape. A bad draw at this point really hurts.

Turn 22

German: I simply wanted to rid my hand of these little fire cards, and may as well try my luck on the only viable group he has in play. I think at this point that I've the game won.

American: My last Concealment card prevents losses from yet another attack. I need a Rally card—no sense in moving without it at this stage. So it's discard time again.

Rex passes up a Fire 6 (Fire 5 card, +1 hill, -1 brush, +1 enemy moving) on Group B. Why? At this stage, a kill is a kill is a kill! The only thing accomplished is that Don used his Concealment card. Don can do nothing now, but sit and watch.

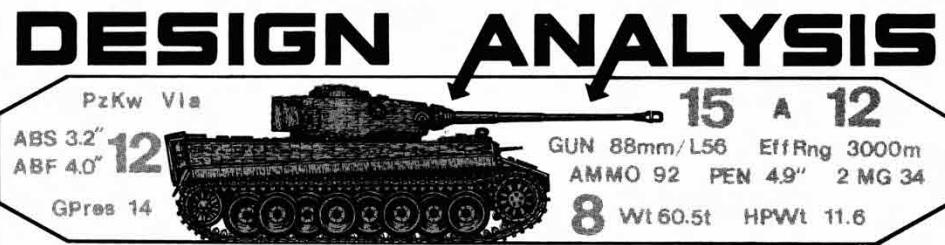
Turn 23

German: I will Hero a rifleman, and hit someone hard. It matters not who I hit, so long as I gain a KIA every turn now, quickly bringing this game to an end. The fire, as luck would have it, takes out his most valuable man—the SL. Now at last, Don begins to show signs of disgust.

American: With that, I've no options left. My chances are between slim and none, and I've grown weary of being a target. I concede.

In retrospect, I lost the game on Turn 11 with my decision not to move out of the flanked position. In all honesty, however, I can't say that I would play it any differently were the same situation to occur again. I could just as easily have moved out of that flanked, but strong, defensive position and into a Stream or Wire with no Movement cards in reserve to get away. A pessimist might even say I lost the game in the opening setup when I deployed for a game of maneuver and then proceeded to get no movement cards.

It was an unusual game of contrasts in that I received the perfect terrain for my opening strategy and then got nothing to back it up (only one Movement card in the first ten crucial turns). By then, the mobile play having failed, I was at a firepower disadvantage which was exaggerated by a never-ending supply of Fire cards to my opponent's hand. Although my opponent had abysmal terrain for the most part, it made no difference because he received such a disproportionate amount of the usable Fire cards. But the unexpected is the name of the game in *UPFRONT*, and that is the secret of its great appeal



2nd Edition UP FRONT

By Don Greenwood

The following changes have been made to the 2nd Edition version of *UP FRONT*. Owners of the first edition should note these changes in their rules and components.

RULES:

3.3 Add: "Men may switch positions within a group during their player turn but must do so as the sole action of that group for that turn. Such a position switch is included as part of any successful weapon acquisition (18.2) or assistant crew assignment (11.12)."

8.9 Insert after the first sentence: "Exc: A defending group on a Wall card may subtract only one from the Fire Strength of a mortar or artillery attack."

17.3 Insert after "other," in the last sentence: "and in which one group may simultaneously flank two adjacent groups,".

17.62 Add to end: "or both encircling groups find themselves "in front of" the encircled group."

17.7 Add to end of eighth sentence: "unless its Lateral Group Transfer did not depend on the success of the other group vacating the area it is moving to."

17.8 Insert in fifth sentence between "move" and "until": "from that range chit."

18.1 Insert after third sentence: "Exc: An infiltrator who is eliminated leaves his weapon in the infiltrated group."

19.15 EX Delete: "or red 6." **Add at end:** "Should a red 6 be drawn, the question of which weapon may malfunction is resolved normally."

20.51 Insert after "Fire attack": "by his group."

Add "20.57 An infiltrator may attempt to acquire any unpossessed weapon of the infiltrated group as if it were his own group (18.2), unless that weapon still has a designated assistant crewman.

20.72 Delete "unpinned".

20.74 Add to end of first sentence: "or removing it from play." **Add at end:** "The man may later voluntarily abandon or destroy his captured weapon only as his group's sole action for the turn."

Add "20.742 If two men eliminate each other in CC their weapons in the infiltrated group for possible acquisition—including acquisition by any infiltrator of the group."

25.41 Change "normally" to "only".

Add "28.32 The TEM of an AFV's current terrain does not affect five vs the Morale and CE defense values of that AFV. The TEM of an AFV's current terrain does affect the first strength of a hit against the Armor and Flank defense values of that AFV (EXC: HullDown; 28.92). The movement status of the defender does not alter the Fire Strength of a hit against AFV targets."

28.4 Delete "also exceeds"; substitute "≥".

28.61 Delete "during . . . resolution."

28.7 EX Delete "and a red 2 RNC would immobilize it". Substitute: "or immobilize it (depending on the color of the next RNC drawn)."

30.3 Note that an incorrect counter face is shown as the reverse of the Panzerfaust marker.

32.21 Insert after "firepower": "an CCV".

39.5 Delete: "printed German".

Delete 41.4 entirely. **41.41 now becomes 41.4.** Add new **41.41** which reads: "Fire into a different game must be resolved before attacks from that same game are resolved against the same target."

ACTION CARDS:

Change the black 7 under column 9 to a black 1 on card #7.

The Marsh cards should have a -1 TEM; not +1. All Movement cards with a black RNC incorrectly refer to a shift of 2 to the left for an infiltration attempt. This reference should be 2 to the right. Cards #1-3, 5-13, 18, 158, and 159 are affected.

PERSONNEL CARDS:

German card #23 should be a SL; not an ASL.

German card #38 CE-side middle column should be labeled "FT FP"; not "To Hit #".

American card #38 should read "CE:9" on the front; not "Button Up".

Russian card #39 should read "To Hit #" on back; not "FT FP".

SCENARIOS:

Replace German card #16 in Scenario B and D with #22.

Replace German card #16 in Scenario C with #9.

COUNTERS:

Two of the ATMM counters contain a misprint on the reverse side; they should read 6-0 is EL; not 1-6 is EL.

★
PVT GREENWOOD

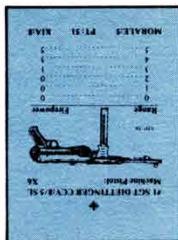


PANIC:5

CCV:4/1

KIA:9

ROUT: Or RNC >5



Range Chit 1

Group B

WALL



Range Chit 2

Group A

BRUSH

CONTEST 119

BUILDINGS (-3)

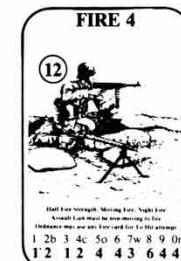
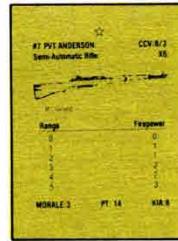
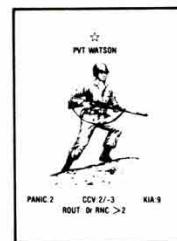
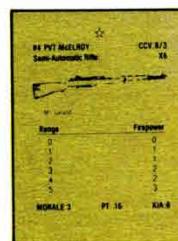
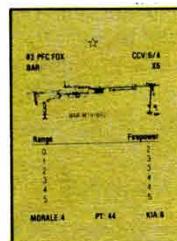
Group C

Range Chit 2

BUILDINGS (-2)

Group A

Range Chit 1



It is the American player turn in a Meeting of Patrols scenario of *UP FRONT*. The game is in the final deck, and by the American player's estimate no more than four cards remain to be drawn. The German player has lost one dead and the Americans have suffered three dead and two routed, leaving the Victory Point tally at present as: U.S. 14, German 16. Given the hand situation illustrated above, make the move most likely to win the game for the American player.

The answer to this contest must be entered on the official entry form (or a facsimile) found on the insert of this issue. Ten winning entries will receive AH merchandise credits. To be valid, an entry must be received prior to the mailing of the next issue of *The GENERAL* and include a numerical rating for the issue as a whole, as well as listing the three best articles. The solution to Contest #119 will appear in Vol. 21, No. 2 and a listing of winners in Vol. 21, No. 3 of *The GENERAL*.

GULLY

Group C

Range Chit 3

THE NIEUWE KADE GAMBIT

A Defensive Set-Up for the British in SOA

By Stephen Llewellyn

"After a few games, players will establish a standard British setup and the only major changes from game to game will be in the placement of the Anti-Tank Guns." (Alan R. Moon, "STORM OVER ARNHEM Series Replay"; The *GENERAL*, Vol. 19, No. 1).

Simplistic statements like the above are the proverbial red flag to the bull with me. Never mind that at the time I happened to agree with Mr. Moon. When I first read those words, I fully believed that a sort of "perfect" standard British placement would do for the first turn, particularly since a great deal afterward depends on what the German opponent will do. The German player needs a turn just to get organized, aside from some annoying artillery barrages, because of that rule restricting placement to no more than five units in each area. I was even mildly grateful to Mr. Moon for sharing his great wisdom with us poor readers.

Don Greenwood, in an article entitled "The Combatants of Arnhem" (Vol. 19, No. 1), points out the advantages and disadvantages of the British placement for holding or abandoning Area 11. "The early fall of area 11 is vital to any southeastern [German] effort", he continued in the Series Replay. "German units advancing into [area] seven while [area] 11 is still in British hands are extremely susceptible to being surrounded and cut to ribbons by multiple low fire power attacks which would turn retreats into kills." His statements were the seeds that gave birth to my plan. What if the British could lure the German player into a trap based on Areas 6, 7 and 8 while he still held control of Area 11?

Sounds like a great idea you may say, but what kind of a German player would be so stupid as to plow in there like a musk ox after Mr. Greenwood's ample warnings. One that does not read *The GENERAL* might be my trite reply; but the use of a gambit is the more direct and serious answer. That is why I labeled my ploy the *Nieuwe Kade Gambit* (I modestly refrained from calling it the Llewellyn Gambit). Gambit—"an opening or move in which a player sacrifices a pawn or piece to secure a position" (*The New Mirriam-Webster Dictionary*). And that is precisely what I advocate.

"Entangled in the British strategy, and indeed the biggest cause of the aggressive versus cautious play dilemma are the Perimeter Victory Point Areas. The German player needs some of these points to win." (Moon, "Series Replay", Vol. 19, No. 1) Thank you, Mr. Moon. So that will be the bait. Some Perimeter Victory Points dangled before the German player. He receives two victory points for each of the six Perimeter Victory Point Areas which he is the sole occupant of at the end of Game Turn 2 and one point for each at the end of Game Turn 3. We're going to get him in there, in the jaws of the wolf, by not defending Area 7.

So what does this gambit look like to the German player, who after all is the poor slob we are trying to trick. Keeping in mind that Area 11 is crammed with Red Devils and one of the Anti-Tank Guns, it looks like the British have left a path open right to the bridge, the very core of the defenses. There is a perimeter bonus left unguarded; it appears to the greedy German as if Area 11 can easily be surrounded and, best of all, those two juicy VPs right at the bridge are exposed.

Of course, his attack will have to be made by SS since the Bohlt Training Company is still back in Brockstraat and Westervoerst; if the German player waits for them to move into position, the opportunity might be lost. The armor had better go

with the SS, he will reason, because they will need some support. That means the Anti-Tank Gun in Area 11 will have to be cleared out; and that means using the German artillery to clear Area 11. Should this be the way the German opponent reads the situation, the result is a full-blooded assault right into the teeth of the British defense. And what did they teach you about that at Officer School? But it is so tempting for him!

As German units move along the riverbank, units from Area 11 can move into Area 8, causing the Germans to be surrounded. This results in Mr. Greenwood's "multiple low fire power attacks" that eliminate units rather than just retreating them. The British move into Area 8 *must* be made after German options are exhausted if at all possible. Still another advantage of abandoning Area 7 is that it gives the British player an extra handful of troops to play with. In the Series Replay, Don Greenwood put the A/1 Platoon in Area 7. Those three units could better go in Area 17 (because of their colored set-up restrictions) and from there move immediately into Area 16 on Turn 16.

Areas 16, 24 and 11 will be the key areas in this strategy. Not only will Area 11 have to be defended from attack, it will also have to be reinforced because units in Area 11 will be sacrificing themselves on the riverbank surrounding Germans. Units in Area 16 will be able to fire into Areas 5 and 6, move reinforcements into Area 24 or into Area 11. Area 16 too must be protected. The British player should only place the minimum of three units in Area 5. Greenwood's RASC Platoon is perfect because it does not appear formidable. In reality, Area 5 is very easily reinforced and defended from Areas 4 and 17. It is also great to fire the feeble British artillery from any number of areas into those massed and milling grey and black uniforms along the river.

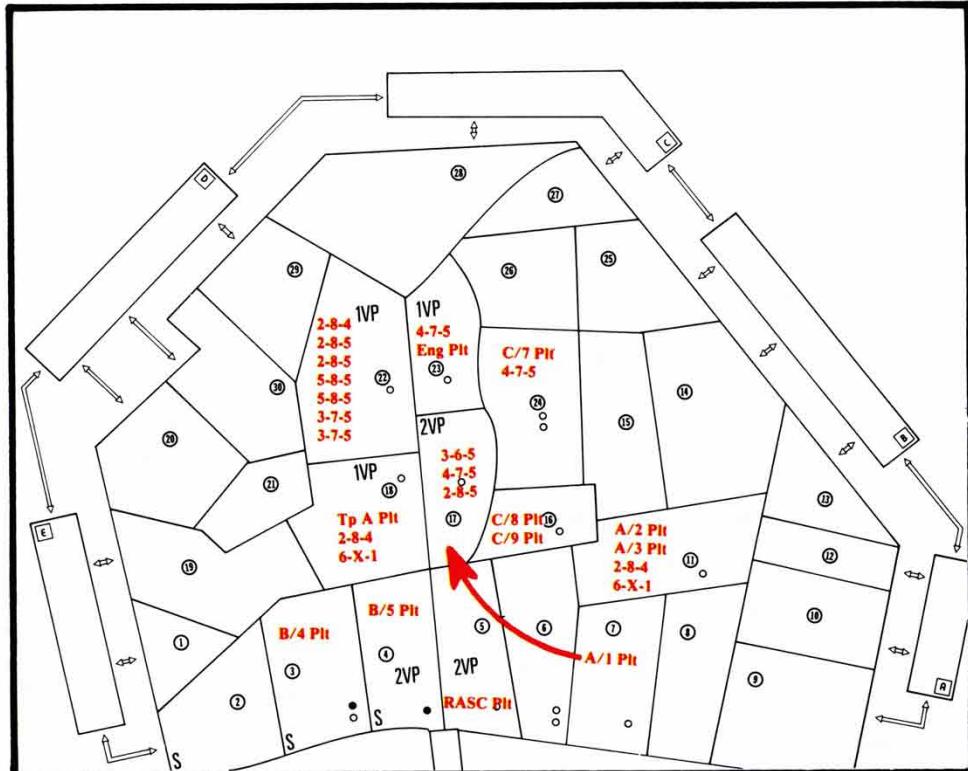
There is some question as to where to place the second Anti-Tank Gun in the Nieuwe Kade Gambit. Placing the gun in Area 18 does cover the entire west side—Areas 3, 4, 18, 22 and 17. But it does not cover Area 5. And Area 5 might well be right where the German armor is charging, especially if the Anti-Tank Gun in Area 11 is eliminated. By placing the second gun in Area 17, you sacrifice little and cover Area 5—the east side is sound. The ultimate decision lies with the British player and his knowledge of his opponent. If the German player is aggressive minded, put the gun in Area 17 because nothing will stop his coming in. But if he is cautious, put the gun in Area 18 because you do not want to scare him off yet. I personally favor placement in Area 18. Remember, the gun can fairly easily be moved to Area 17 provided the Germans aren't in Area 24 or Area 16 (which would be a disaster anyway).

Of course, the ultimate choice of whether to take Mr. Moon's cautious approach or utilize the Nieuwe Kade rests on the British player. Even if the German player does not take the bait, but instead falls backward out of his chair laughing at your pathetic and obvious trap, you are not in bad shape defensively. The units from Area 7 are now in Area 17 where they can easily shift to any threatened breakthrough. Areas 11 and 24 are strongly held and Area 17 backs up the units in Area 16. The British are actually more concentrated by using the Nieuwe Kade Gambit. And the game takes on a more staid pace.

Besides, if your opponent should fall for the gambit . . .



Figure This British set-up is nearly identical to the one used by Alan Moon in the Series Replay, The *GENERAL*, (Vol. 19, No. 2). But note that the A/1 Platoon has been moved out of Area 7 and into Area 17. The result is an open path to the central bridge defenses. But strong British forces in Area 11 make such a journey for the German player very hazardous due to the ease of surrounding the attackers.



THE MEN BEHIND THE CARDBOARD

Who was that 9-2; OR 7-0s are People Too!

By Patrick Callahan

Some time during your hitch as a *SQUAD LEADER* aficionado, you have probably wondered about the game leaders and the men they represent. Have you ever asked yourself who these men are? How did they get to this spot in history, at just the moment our "game" begins. Did they survive the historical engagement? If they did, what happened to them later? Sure—you'll tell me that Capt. Bolter is represented in the scenario "Paw of the Tiger" (*COL*), Rommel is there in "The Dinant Bridgehead" (*COD*), and Gavin is there as a 10-3 in, coincidentally, "Swatting at Tigers" (*GI41*). But other than these few, the leaders in the game are just faceless cardboard counters with no history, no identity and no personality.

We all know that the scenarios are ahistorical. In other words, the game approximates the historical situation in the form of order-of-battle, terrain and time—all of which work within the framework of a detailed fire-and-movement simulation system. All this is well and good, and has produced the best games on this period and scale, ever. But although the game simulates small-scale tactical actions, it does little to set a historical perspective or to create an identity for the game leaders. Of course, that was never the intent of the game's designers and developers. They had enough to contend with, never mind expanded historical contexts and leader identities.

And the scenarios do contain far more historical detail than any other tactical simulation on the market, thanks to the fine work of a cadre of experts. But still . . . wouldn't it be nice if we players could learn more about these faceless leaders? They do deserve more. Unlike planners of the grand strategy whom we read and hear about all the time, they are the ones who *fought* the war; they are the ones whose lives and careers were on the line. Why not honor them by replaying the history they made—and in so doing, use them to enrich the playing of the game scenarios? So, let's do a brief "recce" of an existing scenario and inspect some of the leaders and find out who and what they were, what fate brought them to our attention as the "Squad Leader".

Scenario 43: Action at Kommerscheidt

After their mad dash across France in the summer of 1944, the Allied soldiers approached the final reckoning with the broken Wehrmacht with an attitude of cocky confidence. "Home by Christmas" was the word. And why shouldn't it have been? Hadn't the average Joe on the line bested everything the Germans had thrown in front of him, then chased the remnant right to the borders of Germany itself?

Once there though, they ran head on into the Siegfried Line. This, plus a combination of logistical and tactical problems, brought the offensive to a slow, grinding halt. The whole picture had changed in just the space of a few days. What a week before was one giant "shooting galley" now became a knock-down, drag-out war of attrition on the very border, where gains were measured in yards instead of miles.

By October, the American command was becoming increasingly frustrated. Their efforts to breach the line was meeting with only limited success and producing unacceptable casualties. But there was no choice; if the war was to be won, they had to smash through the Westwall, one way or another. A gap had been ripped in the German

defensive line at Aachen, but the hole had to be enlarged if there was to be any kind of large-scale breakout. The situation called for a limited, division-size thrust to gain high ground overlooking the River Roer. This attack, toward the town of Schmidt, would anchor the right flank of the American salient in the Siegfried Line and provide a springboard position for the final dash across the Roer.

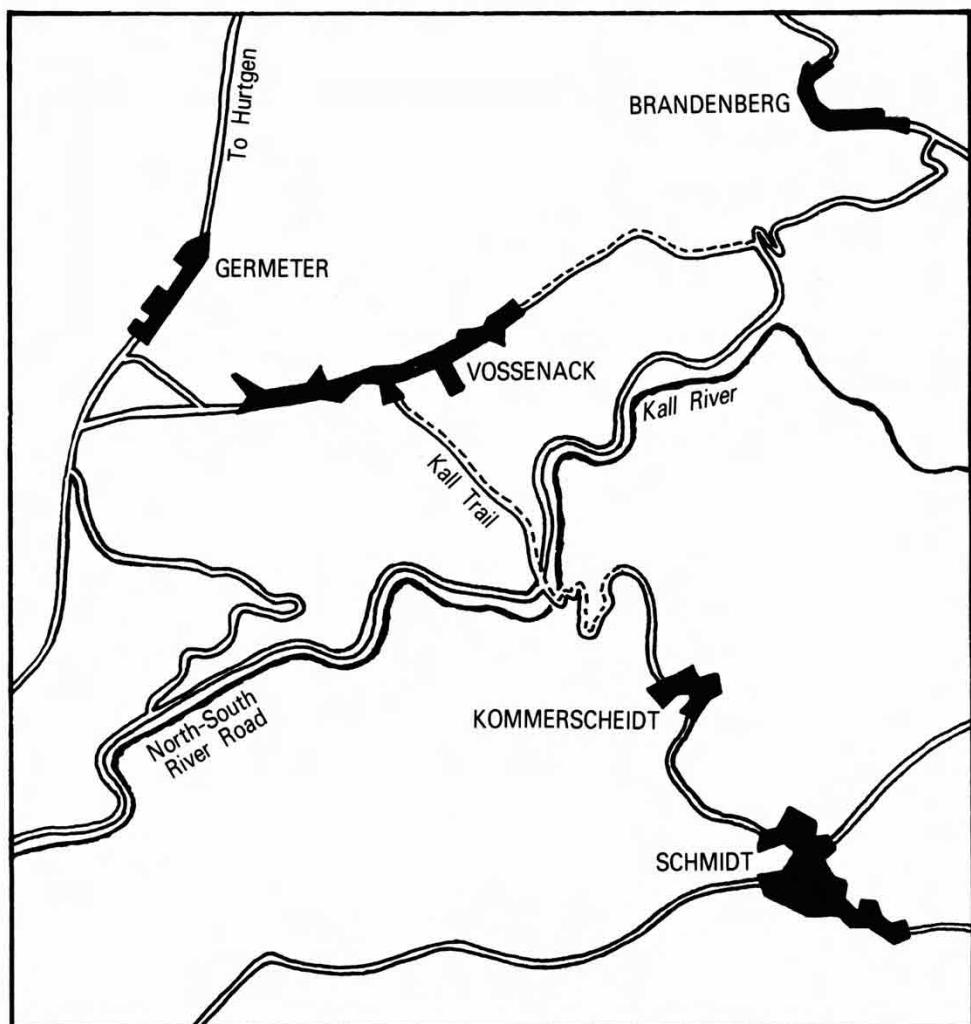
The place the generals chose for the attack (much to the Germans' surprise) was the heavily wooded and heavily defended Huertgen Forest. Leading the American attack was the veteran 9th Division. For two weeks they pounded the German defenses, beat off repeated counterattacks and wallowed in the mud; the net effect was a gain of about two miles and the near destruction of the 9th Division, whose commander named the area "The Bucket of Blood". On 26 October, the 9th was finally pulled out and replaced by the 28th (Keystone) Division, commanded by Major General Norman Cota. Reinforced by troops of the 4th Division, the troopers prepared to take up where the 9th had left off. An attack was planned for the 2nd of November.

Leading the 28th's main effort on that foggy morning toward the key crossroad of Schmidt was the 112th US Infantry Regiment supported by organic artillery, engineers, tank destroyers and the

707th Tank Battalion (from the 4th Infantry Division). Initially the attack were well. Starting off from Germeter (see map), they captured Vossenack in a lightning attack, negotiated the narrow and treacherous Kall trail, crossed the River Kall and overran Kommerscheidt and Schmidt. But, because of the rough nature of the Kall trail, the armor could not keep up the pace, and only the infantry was able to deploy in the front-line positions to await the inevitable counterattack.

Then, on the morning of 4 November, the Germans opposite launched a heavy attack on Schmidt, shattering the 112th's 3rd Infantry Battalion with a combined-arms attack. They drove the defenders out of Schmidt back into Kommerscheidt. Wounded and stragglers from the battered companies in Schmidt were filtering back through Kommerscheidt all morning with tales of German tanks overrunning their positions. "They're throwing everything at us!" jittery doughs would say as they passed the 1st Battalion foxholes while heading for the rear to reorganize.

This mass exodus did nothing for the morale of the men in Kommerscheidt. Certain units had to be "persuaded" to stay in the line, and reorganization of some of the Schmidt defenders was accomplished only with great difficulty. Complicating this situation further was an order from Division HQ to counterattack and retake Schmidt immediately.



(This order apparently became the first casualty of the day for the 1st Battalion.) As the morning wore on, cooler heads prevailed and the situation was stabilized somewhat with the arrival of three tanks from the struggling 707th Tank Battalion. Then, at 2 pm, the Germans attacked.

At this point, Scenario 43 begins.

The Battle and Its Aftermath

Before daybreak on 4 November, after several unsuccessful tries the previous day, 1st Lt. Raymond E. Flieg (9-2 armor leader) of the veteran A Company, 707th Tank Battalion, 4th Infantry Division, started out once more for Vossenack with his platoon of vehicles on the treacherous trip down the Kall Trail to relieve the defenders of Kommerscheidt. The rest of his company was to follow as soon as it was light. Flieg's troubles began immediately. Not long after entering the narrow defile, his tank ran over a mine and blocked the trail. Bristling because the way was supposed to have been cleared by engineers, he went to work winching the rest of the platoon around his de-tracked vehicle.

Changing tanks, Flieg pressed on. The trail was serpentine and required constant stopping and starting to get the massive tanks around tight corners and avoid rocky outcroppings that could plunge the tanks into the Kall gorge below. But finally, with great care, he succeeded in reaching Kommerscheidt just about daybreak. Two other tanks, those of Sgt. Barton and Sgt. Spooner, caught up just before noon. Then, in the crisp afternoon following their lunch break, the Germans—reorganized after their assault on Schmidt, launched their expected attack from a wooded draw on the edge of the town.

Taking up position northwest of the village, Flieg ambushed the approaching German panzers, scoring hits on the tracks of two. His mates in their tanks to his flanks accounted for another. Seeing that another armored threat was developing against the other side of the town, he left the other two tanks to cover the approaches and moved there to engage German tanks at a range of just two hundred yards.

Flieg hit the lead Panther with two HE rounds and didn't dent it, but the German crew panicked and bailed out. Realizing that AP ammo (which was stored outside the turret on the sponson rack) would be necessary to take on the monsters, he ceased fire and rotated the turret to get at it. While Flieg and his gunner were getting the shells, the German crew re-entered their tank and opened fire. They missed with their first shot. Working in a fever of anxiety, Flieg's first AP shot took the barrel off the Panther, and the next three penetrated the armor plating and set the enemy afire—killing the entire crew.

Meanwhile, another Panther approached to within two yards of the edge of the town, blasting away at the G.I.s in buildings at pointblank range. It was supported by still another tank that was slightly farther back. Realizing the threat, Sgt. Tony Kudiak (8-1 1st Sgt.) and Pvt. Paul Lealsy ran back into the town to rally some infantry to assault the tank in close combat. At just that moment, a P-47 Thunderbolt appeared and dropped two bombs, immobilizing the nearest tank. The tank covering it drove off the Thunderbolt. Seeing their opportunity in the confusion, Kudiak and Lealsy approached the panzer from the side and, with Kudiak firing, placed a bazooka rocket between the tracks and the lower body plating. This tank also burst into flame and killed the crew.

After this second setback, the Germans retired, harassed by artillery and aircraft all the way back to Schmidt. The defenders breathed a collective sigh of relief; their line had been strained to the breaking point and casualties were heavy. Too, ammunition and medical supplies shortages were mounting, but they had held.

The next day (5 November) some additional armor support came up, which included the tanks from Flieg's company. Possibly resentful of their tardiness, Flieg, as ranking officer in command, posted the new arrivals at the very spot where the Germans had aimed their initial attack on the town the day before. Flieg, Barton and Spooner then moved to the other side of the town to rest. Was Flieg trying to tell the new arrivals something, or was it just military judgement that led to their being positioned in the "hot spot"? We'll never know. Flieg's attitude almost certainly wasn't improved by the fact that his CO, Captain Hostrup, along with most of the other tankers had been stuck back on the Kall Trail for the last two days while he, Barton and Spooner, not only had negotiated the trail but had met and blunted the German onslaught, unaided by their buddies from A Company.

Despite the fact that with the aid of these reinforcements, the Kommerscheidt defenders met and beat off three successive attacks that day, they ultimately succumbed to overwhelming pressure and supply shortages. The combination of armor and artillery, and the twisting Kall Trail supply line, not to mention a flanking maneuver down the Kall Valley by a recon battalion of the 116th Panzer Division, forced the Americans to retreat to the east side of the river. The vehicles, unable to negotiate the trail with speed, were destroyed along with most of the heavier weaponry.

The situation had returned to virtually what it had been before the 28th had launched its attack by 9 November. It would remain deadlocked until the next February when the area was finally cleared by the 78th Infantry Division.

Meanwhile, the 28th was relieved and sent to a quiet area to rest and refit. Flieg survived the battles of the Kall; so did Barton, Spooner, Kudiak and Lealsy—only to be caught up a month later in another fiasco known as the Battle of the Bulge.



SERIES 300

G.I.: ANVIL OF VICTORY SCENARIOS

SERIES 300 is a pad of ten scenarios for *G.I.: ANVIL OF VICTORY* printed on the same index stock and in the same style used for both *SQUAD LEADER* and all its gamettes. These scenarios were designed by the team of Jon Mishcon and Joe Suchar and playtested by several of the *SL* playtest groups who play so important a role in the continuing development of the game system. For those players disdaining the "design your own" approach, here is your chance to experience more *GI* scenarios which have been tested for balance and constitute top quality playing aids. Here is the chance to employ more of those special US armor units provided with *GI* in scenarios based on the final death throes of the Thousand Year Reich, as the wounded but still dangerous German military machine strives with its last resources to defend the Fatherland.

The ten scenarios comprising *SERIES 300* are titled as follows: TRIAL BY COMBAT (1945), THE CLEARING (1944), STAND FAST (1944), THRUST AND PARRY (1945), RIPOSTE (1945), THE DUEL (1945), THE RAG TAG CIRCUS (1945), POINT D'APPUI (1944), HAN-SUR-NEID (1944), and THE ROER BRIDGEHEAD (1945).

SERIES 300 is available by mail order only from the Avalon Hill Game Company for \$5.00 plus usual postage charges. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

RETAIL OUTLETS

Daily the offices of Avalon Hill receive requests from gamers for the location of the nearest retail outlet in their locale. Unfortunately, the Avalon Hill Game Company deals through wholesale distributors exclusively; no comprehensive listing of retail stores which offer our fine line is maintained. Until now we have met such requests with the suggestion that the gamer check the yellow pages for the better hobby and bookstores of his region, many of which carry Avalon Hill titles. However, the editors have managed to compile a *partial* listing of retail outlets offering the best of adult games. Look for Avalon Hill games at the following fine stores:

Connecticut—Bethel: Bethel Hobby Shop; Bristol: Bristol Hobby; Darien: Just Hobbies; East Hartford: Hobbytime Stores; Enfield: Crafter; Fairfield: Blinn's; Glastonbury: Davis Hobby; Greenwich: Greenwich Sport Shop; Groton: The Citadel, Lee's Kiddie Land; Guilford: Ed's Enterprise; Hamden: Toy Barn; Logan: Jane's Toys & Hobbies; Meriden: Family Hobbies; Middletown: Amato's; Milford: Arcade Hobby Parlor; New Britain: Amato's Department Store of Hobbies; New Haven: Hull's; New London: Lee's Kiddie Land; North Haven: Hubies Hobbies; Norwalk: Family Hobbies; Norwich: Norwichtown Mall Bookstore; Oldsaybrook: Ed's Enterprise; Ridgefield: Branchville Hobbies; Stamford: The Hobbyist; Tolland: Hobby World; Westport: Green Farms Book Store; Wethersfield: Creative

Delaware—Dover: Cobel's; Wilmington: Vandever's Hobby Center

Maine—Augusta: Kennebec Books; Bangor: The Gamekeeper Inc.; Brunswick: Ask Your Mother; Caribou: H.C. Leathercraft

Massachusetts—Acton: The Game Shop, The Hardware Place; Arlington: Excalibur Hobbies Ltd.; Braintree: Hobbytown; Bedford: Bowens Toyland & Hobby Center; Boston: Eric Fuchs Hobbies, The Name of the Game; Brockton: Hobbytown; Burlington: Eric Fuchs Hobbies; Cambridge: Games People Play; Chicopee: Hobbytown; Danvers: Hobbytown; Dedham: Hobbytown; Edgartown: Fligors; Framingham: Hobbytown; Hanover: Hobbytown; Holyoke: Electronics Boutique, Hobbytown; Hyannis: Hobbytown; Marlboro: C&D Pool Supply, The Spare Time Shop; Nantucket: Robinsons; New Bedford: Baldwins Office Supply, Hobbytown, Saltmarsh's; Peabody: Eric Fuchs Hobbies; Norwood: Sanco Toy; Springfield: Electronics Boutique, Johnsons Bookstore, Tin Soldier; Sudbury: The Village Tinker Inc.; Swansea: Hobbytown; Vineyard Haven: Brickman's; Watertown: Hobbytown; Watatham: Mr. Big Toyland; Worcester: Hobbytown, The Citadel

New Brunswick—Fredericton: Shopette Ltd., Leisure World

Newfoundland—St. John's: Leisure World; Niagara Falls: Leisure World

New Hampshire—Concord: Toy City; Keneb: Toy City; Laconia: Eric Fuchs Hobbies; Manchester: Game & Hobby World

New Jersey—Burlington: Game World; Chester: Game World; East Brunswick: Meyer's Discount; Fairfield: Game Room; Flemington: Hobnob; Lakewood: Yank's Hobby Shop; Livingston: Games 'n Gadgets; Montclair: The Compleat Strategist; Ocean: Game Room; Pensauken: Ted's Engine House; Ramsey: Hi-Way Hobby House; Rockaway: Electronics Boutique; Somerville: Skydell's Voorhees: Games 'n Gadgets; Wayne: Games 'n Gadgets; Woodbridge: Electronics Boutique, Game Room

New York—Auburn: Kids Town; Bronxville: Robert's Toytown; Brooklyn: Hobby Hut; Buffalo: George & Company; Colonie: A&G Bike & Hobby; Depew: Adventure Game & Hobbies; Dewitt: Kids Town; East Aurora: Leader Toy & Hobby Shop; Huntington: Playtime, Sports Town, Toy Town; Mamaroneck: Miller's Hobbies; Middletown: Toys Plus; Mineola: Waterloo Hobbies; Nanuet: Games & Gadgets; New York City: Blacker & Kouby Station, The Compleat Strategist; Rochester: Campaign HQ; Staten Island: Game World, Smiling Sunny's Toy Center; Stony Brook: Waterloo Hobbies; Syracuse: Kids Town; White Plains: Three B's; Williamsville: Grell's Toy & Hobby

Nova Scotia—Charlottetown: Leisure World; Halifax: Leisure World, Maritime Hobbies & Crafts Ltd.; New Glasgow: Leisure World; Sidney: Leisure World; Truro: Leisure World, P.E.I.

Quebec—Hull: W.H. Smith; Montreal: International Hobby, W.H. Smith; Pointe Claire: W.H. Smith; St. Laurent: W.H. Smith; Saskatoon: Peter Pan

Rhode Island—Newport: The Hobby Shop; Providence: The Game Keeper; Warwick: The Toy Shoppe; Westerly: Iron Horse Hobbies

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ANVIL OF MY EYE



GIs in the Maelstrom

By Mark C. Nixon

For Vol. 20, No. 1, Mark Nixon authored an insightful piece analyzing the scenarios of *GI: Anvil of Victory*. He investigated the first eight scenarios. We had hoped to present the rest of his effort shortly thereafter, but changes in his personal life (job, home, lifestyle, family) delayed Mr. Nixon's completion of the final draft. Now, happily for us, he has returned to the hobby. This article, compliment to the first, well marks his return to the ranks of SL experts.

Any praise which may be generated by what follows is due in large part to the efforts of a veritable cadre of *G.I.* heroes: Tim Fuchs, Russ Hall, Ken Stein, and Pat Nicely. Only through their industry was I able to accumulate a substantial number of high quality playings of the fifteen scenarios—both initially for the playtest and subsequently with revised rules. However, any outrage with the ensuing account need look no further than this writer, who alone has construed the fine work of this crew to suit his own ends in preparing this article, so published without opportunity for their comment. I have glossed over and excluded many worthwhile ideas, strategies, positions and concepts for the sake of presenting in a reasonable amount of words what are to me, at this point in time, the most obvious and basic considerations for each of the fifteen scenarios.



Scenario 41 Swatting at Tigers

Rating: 50%-50%

Attraction: Tiger tanks vs. Colonel Gavin leading no fewer than twenty-five squads in a wild scramble. Who could ask for more?

American Advantages: Colonel Gavin. Depth.

Colonel Gavin is the single most important counter on the board, worth more than a Tiger tank. He begins the scenario stacked with three squads and you should channel your efforts towards keeping three squads with him as much as

possible in order to maximize the -3 modifier. There should always be a bazooka with this stack. Only a desperate tanker will present a side or rear shot to a bazooka guided by the -3 modifier, and almost certainly will never move adjacent.

Squads stacked with Gavin will rarely break and will almost never be in a broken condition after any rally attempt unless Gavin himself is broken. Provided he does not pull a foolish stunt like moving in the open within range of enemy units, there is little chance of him breaking from any attack not involving either an enemy -2 leader or a Tiger tank. Even the -2 leaders do not pose a terribly serious threat unless the German manages to gather three of his precious few squads into the same hex or firegroup. The one situation Gavin must avoid is allowing himself to be surrounded. To prevent this he must keep the Tigers under surveillance and pull back when it is apparent they may be poised for an assault. You should also maintain defensive positions on each of his flanks as a precaution against this.

With twenty-five squads you have enough depth to form an advanced picket line, a Hill 621 firebase, defense in depth between these two, and still have forces available to throw at any overextended Tiger or pretentious infantry formation. Should a Tiger grow overconfident and advance within your striking distance, you should not hesitate to risk (sacrifice) one or two squads to pave the way (draw fire) for two or three other squads to nail it (in a

coffin). Your 7-4-7s are excellent tank killers in close combat. If you manage to destroy a tank, the German will have to be extremely cautious with his other four lest he "back out" of the victory criteria due to the armor loss conditions.

American Disadvantages: Rule 41.6. Effective Range vs. Tigers.

Read Rule 41.6 carefully; note the starting locations of the enemy; count how few turns it would take for them to move the Tigers off Board 15 and consider how easy it might be for them to obliterate a squad or two on the way. Now, get real worried about an early German victory. Don't panic, just allow yourself enough concern to generate some careful planning to either keep the enemy on Board 15, inflict grievous casualties if they make a break for Board 2, or a favorable combination of the two. Bear in mind that the criteria of 41.6 may force upon you the bizarre decision to refuse fire at an enemy target on Board 15 for fear that its elimination may give your foe a victory. Quite strange, but so long as you understand the implication it becomes no more than another calculation on your path to victory.

Bazookas against Tiger tanks? Face it, you will not enjoy a great amount of fire opportunities against enemy armor. Bazooka chances against frontal armor are minimal, and beyond a three-hex range you probably won't even hit the target unless it is not moving and Colonel Gavin himself is directing fire. The Tigers may opt to hang back at a five- or six-hex range from the nearest bazooka, remain buttoned up and blast away. What can you do? The answers should be obvious. When you can, you run away. When you can't, you may die. When you feel lucky or when a tank is out on a limb, you may try to attack it. The old cliche, "play it by ear" comes to mind. One thing is certain. If you stick around long enough for an 88 to attain -2 acquisition, it is advisable you seek psychiatric help.

Redeeming features of the artillery piece, WP8 and H6, are practically nullified by lessening the depletion numbers by 2 due to Ordnance Note "H". Your best bet is to hide the gun, which regrettably removes from the action your only anti-tank weapon possessing a decent range. But, after all, it does not possess very effective killing power and the prospect of its early loss applied to the victory condition makes this weapon a liability in the early going.

American Opening:

You most certainly should move a squad with bazooka from hex 15S7 to Q8 ground floor. The other squad can advance phase into R8 or double time and bypass through U9 to get to T10 and advance into S10. These squads should prevent German infantry from attempting to ride past mounted on tanks, and are a deterrent against the tanks themselves. The enemy will probably use the first turn to assault these positions and send a tank or two up the slopes of Hill 783. He may also run around the north end of the hill. Either way, the 15S7 squads are buying time for the rest of your force to become very familiar with their shovels.

I do not favor a heavier commitment to this forward outpost, but would not protest if a squad from hex T4 ran up to R6 or R8. Units beginning in T6, however, definitely should not participate in this delaying action. You need the MMG and bazooka elsewhere and require portage services of the two squads and leader to get them to 15X1 on the first turn, where they should have at least one turn to roll for entrenchment.

Other movement should approximate the following: U3 to 2S1; W2 to Z4; T3 to O3 and N1; V2 to U2 and 2O1; and T4 to V4, U2 and 2O1. Three squads, the MMG and one 9-1 leader should be able to entrench 2O5. The other three squads, one bazooka and a 9-1 starting in 2R3 can get to the 2X0-Z1 area, or to 15H1 or 2Y4 without the

bazooka. Any 6-6-6s with a 9-1 in 2Y4 should keep enemy infantry off their tanks in the 15B3 pass. The howitzer is hidden in any of the nine woods hexes available. Hex N3 is first choice if you think you'll ever want it to fire.

As may be expected, the number of squads in your command is such that a quite dazzling array of variations on this theme might be proposed. You must remember that the Tigers will be your main adversary and so arrange your defense to deny them control of the field. You can't do much to prevent them from "dominating" the playing area from Board 15 heights, but you can do a great deal about keeping them off Hill 621 and hitting you with a murderous crossfire.

German Advantages: Tigers. Leadership.

If you play against a GI commander who is bull-headed enough, your five Tigers pack sufficient firepower to stand off and win the game for you. However, most GI commanders will back away from your guns, at least after losing a stack or two. You will still want to avail yourself of some of the finer locations on the heights of Board 15 for bombarding US positions. But sooner or later you will have to move a few tanks into the valley between Board 2 and the Board 15 heights to soil their paws in the loathsome task of ferreting out enough GIs to kill for a win.

Those tanks can run roughshod over the GIs but are by no means immune to enemy squads and bazookas which manage to get close enough. You cannot simply roll into the enemy and expect him to melt away. Instead, you will find it necessary to concentrate two or more Tigers, plus infantry support, on any American position you wish to seriously mangle. Any tank commander who finds himself sharing a close combat hex with a 7-4-7 or two better pray he has a *Nahverteidungswaffe*. Threat of this weapon alone may keep Colonel Gavin out of close combat with the Tigers.

Never before have so few been led so well by so many. Five leaders directing eleven squads with a total of -6 modifiers is quite unheard of. Even GI leadership in this scenario compares favorably with their norm thanks to Gavin and the elite nature of the paras. But they don't hold a candle to these crack units of the Hermann Goering Division. The leader/squad ratio is so extreme that any attempt to enter a standard firefight with the GIs may lead to frustration as the 9-2 and 10-2 leader vie for the opportunity to direct the fire of only five squads and one LMG.

But you don't want to firefight. You want to chew into one part of the enemy line and either break through to Hill 621 or roll up either flank. This is a job for the Tigers, and they will need close support. By carefully avoiding normal range enemy fire and negative modifier leaders, especially Colonel Gavin, the -2 leaders enable their attendant squads to remain mounted for such an assault. The other three squads and the 8-0 will have to dismount out of harm's way, freeing three Tigers to cover the assault force.

German Disadvantages: None.

For the second time in the first nine scenarios I can't identify even a single German disadvantage which might hamper them any more than vagaries of the dice. If you overextend yourself or spread your force across the board to engage the entire enemy line at once, you have only yourself to blame for what happens. But if the howitzer or a bazooka at a four-hex range takes a pot shot against frontal armor and knocks out a Tiger, the caution forced on your remaining panzer force may allow victory to slip from your grasp.

Likewise, any risks you take with the "At Start" infantry may precipitate your own doom since you are initially short of manpower. But the game lasts ten turns. You have plenty of time to bring on the reinforcements before any all out infantry assault

may be necessary.

German Opening:

American occupation of hex 15Q8 creates something of a traffic jam for you. Also, if they have audaciously run the MMG from T6 to S210, which can hit L7, M8, N7 and O7, you should consider a full fledged assault on the Q8-S10 area. If you can bag the MMG and 9-1 in the first few turns the GI will be hurting later. But even in this event you must climb Hill 783 with a pair of Tigers to hold the bulk of US troops at bay.

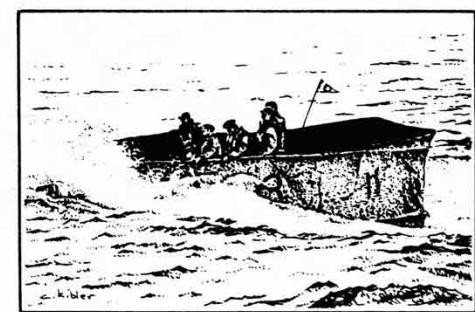
An end run around the north of Hill 783 covered by units on the hill itself will bring you in on the enemy flank. This maneuver will prove very effective if the GIs have not initially moved units from Hill 621 as detailed above. If they have occupied 2Y4 with two 6-6-6s and a 9-1, any northern thrust with mounted infantry will be a risky venture. Additionally, I would not try it without infantry support in this case, although an abbreviated sweep to hit the 15H0 area from the north can prove beneficial.

Your standard line is to reduce building 15Q8 and any opposition in R6. Then you can take up positions on the heights of Hill 783 to blast away for a few turns or maybe even move into the valley immediately with an assault force if you see an opening. If none is apparent take a few turns to lay some HE into the GI and rake him with your AFV MGs. Even if this doesn't exactly bring havoc upon him it will force him to abandon some positions as he reshuffles his defense to avoid your fire.

Meanwhile, the two Tigers with -2 leaders should be maneuvering behind cover to a position from which they will be able to lash out at any hole you can force in the defense. Once you have broken into the enemy line you can begin to chew away toward either flank, tying down reinforcements with fire from Hill 783. Your own reinforcements ought to arrive in time for the final push against the enemy in the valley or even onto Hill 621 itself.

Conclusion:

Certainly, this will be a favorite scenario for many gamers. Both sides possess great strength, although in contrasting ways. Some may feel that five Tiger tanks ought to make mincemeat of the GIs. Others may think twenty-five GI squads led by a 10-3 and wielding seven bazookas should prove an insurmountable obstacle for the Germans. But the fact is that this situation is surprisingly close, especially considering the disparate forces involved.



Scenario 42

Bridgehead on The Rhine

Rating: 45%-55% Pro-British

Attraction: Pandemonium erupts over four boards. Who is on offense and who is running away? Elements of both forces are surrounded as four separate engagements entangle themselves. Will the Shermans prevail over the gun on Hill 547?

German Advantages: Height. Concealment.

You begin as unquestioned master of everything higher than Level 1. Consequently, your machine

guns, radio and ATG will dominate play for at least the first few turns. Buildings 6J8 and 3M2 are the most critical positions on the board for two reasons. They provide strongholds you require to fight off a superior enemy and allow a means to keep that foe away from your ATG in 3R2, which is your only first class defense against the Shermans.

Make no mistake. You must intentionally deny those Board 13 British machine guns an eleven-hex shot at your ATG. The realization of any Board 3 British hauling a HMG onto Hill 522 or placing anybody at all on Hill 534 will awaken nightmares of your amateurish play for the rest of your life. Their Board 3 contingent should never be able to threaten that gun directly.

Even on Board 8 you enjoy the favor of height. This will permit your decidedly inferior garrison to hold out against potentially overwhelming odds for a surprise number of turns.

One note. I might have listed your radio as an advantage. But without height for spotting, it would compare to a HMG on ground level. It can be easily avoided. It therefore seemed prudent to let the height advantage stand to cover the radio.

Twenty Concealment counters! What can't you do with such a ghost force? They will conceal your most valuable positions from first turn enemy fire. Hopefully your radio will remain concealed for many turns. They will fill in the gaps of your defense and cast doubt to your opponent. They will even create bogus positions to blow away the mind—if not the body—of your enemy. Delaying tactics; delaying tactics. Scatter them hither and yon. Let not a position go seemingly undefended. Only a sad and wiser Brit will know the truth of each stone turned. Make him eat time. Blast him into that great hereafter if he runs past what he perceives to be a stack of ?'s. Be certain you do it properly the first time and he won't risk it again.

German Disadvantages: Space. Quality.

Actually, you don't have a bad group to command. But problems are apparent in two forms. That is, you have a large area to defend with mediocre troops. An ELR of 3 does not benefit this detachment of paratroops and Panzer Grenadiers. But we must remember this is 1945. Things are not what they once were.

One thing which compounds your problems, apart from anything which might be created by an individual playing of the scenario, is your leader dilemma. You are one or two leaders shy of the total required to conduct a legitimate defense of the entire playing area. You will not have enough leaders to maintain scattered troops with an ELR of but 3. These two facts, leaders and ELR, are what make the space you must defend your most serious problem.

Certainly, you have five locations which must be considered first-rate. These are your infantry strongpoints of 6J8 and building 3M2, wherever you locate the radio on second or third level, the ATG and the SPW. Unfortunately, the balance of your troops are largely abandoned, isolated, or at best in third-rate positions (except the Board 8 group). This is due to the vastness of the battlefield and paucity of leaders. In no way can you expect to cover all vital positions and avenues of enemy movement. Squads placed out on a limb beyond the reaches of a leader do not enjoy even a reasonable chance of rallying. But you will probably find some of your force in just such a precarious situation as you twist and turn to fend off the British. Phony positions of concealment counters will help immensely but you know that a few real squads must be filtered into such positions in order to prove you have some bite.

German Set-Up:

Some positions have been mentioned and were obvious anyway. HMG, MMG, two squads and a 9-1 in 6J8 third level or 6K8 second level. The radio

and a leader go in whichever of these two is free. Also try utilizing the second level of 6J8 with concealment in 6K8, second level for a switch. Hexes 3N1 and N2 need the other MMG and 9-1, four squads and a few LMGs.

The most interesting position of your defense is the ATG in hex 3F2. From here it commands a respectable portion of the battlefield, most importantly the entire area of the British armor river crossing. It will enjoy shots at the tanks before they enter the river, while they are in it and at a large portion of the terrain they must traverse after emerging. But don't break out the Schnapps and drink to those smoking (or sinking) ruins of British armor. At least not yet.

When you reread rules 126.6, 126.62, 149.42, and 149.43 and then carefully lay out the river hexes you cannot see from 3F2, targets in the water suddenly are not as abundant as you may have expected. It is also dreadfully hard to hit the damned thing in the water. Finally, your vision may be hindered by crafty placement of British smoke. Make sure you set up with the covered arc facing hexes 3E2 and F1. This gives a clean shot at 8A3, the best river entrance hex for the tanks and only place they can enter the water on Turn 1.

Board 8 will be the scene of small scale action but will provide an inordinate amount of excitement in this scenario. You can't afford to defend victory buildings here as you would like to. Your best leaders and equipment are required elsewhere. Besides, only a few British squads will come your way and three or four defenders may hold them off well enough. The problem is that no matter who you place here, he will attract enemy armor. If you give this area too much strength, your Board 3 and 6 positions will suffer greatly and the British will enjoy the luxury of sending two Shermans against this Board 8 defense.

The position of greatest importance on Board 8 is W5 with the SPW, 4-6-7, two LMGs and 8-1 all CE. These are poised to rain lead amongst CE tanks daring the 8L4 to Q2 river entrance area. His only other river entrance hex is 8A3, so this is nothing to be taken lightly. Some will argue that hex 8S8 or T7 would be better locations due to shorter range to the floating targets. But these are also in normal range of British squad and LMG fire from 8O9 and P10, starting in their Turn 1 DF, plus the fact that you can shoot at the DD tanks in the water longer from W5. Others will want to go whole hog and place MMGs, the HMG or even the radio on Board 8. This is only delusion. Committing such material here will only lead to your early demise on Boards 3 and 6 where the main engagement is in progress.

The beauty of starting the SPW on Board 8 is that it can easily move to a different sector on the turn it becomes obvious there no longer is any chance of damaging a DD tank. The passengers can debark wherever they are needed in this mad dash. Thus, you avoid leaving a strong force in a position where they may be useless.

British Advantages: Armor. Leaders. Quantity.

What could be better? Armor, leadership and numerical superiority. But your armor cannot be used until about the fourth or fifth at the earliest, and your infantry is headed for a pounding from FFE, infantry howitzers and those impressive German machine guns. Your troops have difficult terrain to cross in the face of such enemy fire. Losses will be high.

The leadership advantage is not enjoyed equally by your two infantry forces. On Board 3 you have a -1 leader modifier for every three squads. The other group has a -1 for every five squads. In contrast, each -1 enemy modifier is shared by six squads. Your 9-2 makes up some of the difference for the Board 6 group. But he is effective to the maximum only when stacked with a large fire group, which you will be loath to create while the

FFE roams the board. In this respect the three -1 leaders on Board 3 lend consistency to their force in that it is not subject to dissipation at the loss of a single piece.

Finally, your group assaulting Board 8 is usually led by a mere 8-0, hardly the ideal man to inspire the sort of heroics which may be required to break the will to resist of these defenders. It would be more correct to say these squads are followed, not led, by the 8-0, as he surely will not be in the forefront attracting fire. He is with you strictly for rally duty. This is why the 9-1 should be with the main force assaulting hex 6J8. He is needed there.

British Disadvantages: River Crossing. Board 6.

Imagine this scenario without a river separating oncoming tanks and the battle. There wouldn't be much of a contest, barring careless maneuver or unusual luck with ATG shots. The river effectively keeps the tanks out of the battle for half this scenario, and forces them to absorb potentially killing fire to get into it.

British attempts to cross Board 6 may require creation of a cemetery terrain overlay so you can accurately depict the result of any overzealous northward charge. Your advance across Board 6 is the crux of this scenario and also the most difficult task you face.

In any case, British disadvantages provide a theme for the following treatment of their attack, and are detailed in that section.

British Advance:

It is fairly certain you won't be going anywhere with the Board 3 force until help arrives. But this is not to say you should sit on your hands either. Setting up in hex 3S6 and 3T5 will keep the enemy out of building T6 and often allow you to take that building first turn. This could then be followed by building S8 and eventual movement west of Hill 522 to take control of buildings there. However, upon seeing this tactic most Germans will start forces in the woods behind T6 and you will probably opt to pull back into the village to conserve your troops until a later time. But, you have forced his hand. Maybe he would have rather not placed any squads in this sector. Now they too are isolated from the bulk of their countrymen.

I would put the HMGs, two leaders and three squads in building 3R2. These can hit building 3M2 with a 24 (+2) attack and leave plenty of infantry to form a ring around the village perimeter. The worst that can happen to you immediately would be called in from offboard. Attracting the FFE here would give those boys crossing Board 6 a tremendous lift though. Watch out for hidden 75s. The enemy knows he'll have targets for these guns in the village and will likely position at least one of them to blast you.

I don't mind taking a gamble that three squads in 8C9 can lay Turn 1 smoke in hex B9. If successful, bring all four tanks in at A1. They will all be in the water in the A or B column by the second turn. They are behind the smoke and the hill/building obstacle around 8C9. Of course, always use motion counters for DD tanks on land hexes. Then send the squads to E10 to lay smoke into F10 to cover tanks exiting the river. If smoke doesn't work enter two tanks at A1. One goes in the water immediately while the other stays in B0, to await a Turn 2 dash-and-splash. The other two will have to enter at I1 and move wherever they can find best cover while being assured of a second turn river entrance. Hexes I2 and I3 are likely spots. There they are far from enemy infantry on the W5 heights.

The bulk of your relief column faces the difficult task of fulfilling their prophecy and actually supplying relief to their colleagues on Board 3. The perils involved here have already been covered in detail. How then are you ever going to reach Board 3 with this relief column? The answer lies in a combination of tactics and considerations.

The two most important facts to remember are that it is likely you won't get anywhere in force without the tanks and that if there is any way you might eliminate the ATG you should try it. Obviously, success in the latter will greatly influence the former. With the ATG gone, the Shermans will enjoy their stay in Speldorf a great deal more.

The sad fact is that the FFE does not allow you to congregate all those wonderful mortar, MGs and 4-5-7s in the 6G1 to 6N0 woods so that you can plaster building 6J8. You are asking for an early end to the scenario if you try it. But you must get past 6J8 to hit the ATG. Instead, you must slip single squads through the woods and along the hedge or wall lines. Leave a few squads behind and, above all, leave only a scattered group for enemy FFE targeting. You will have to bide your time and absorb some of the FFE. Sooner or later the enemy will lose contact or maybe even intentionally lay off the FFEs until you present more tempting targets, although this latter is unlikely once he has begun landing the HE.

It is probably too much to ask, but at the same time you are dispersing and in general avoiding large stacking, you must do everything possible to subdue enemy forces in building 6J8 with the ATG as your ultimate goal. At least this is what you must try. Don't be disappointed if you enjoy less than complete success. The cavalry is only a hop, skip and a jump across the river.

The final verdict is that the relief column probably has no chance to win the game for you until the tanks arrive. However, improper use of this force is the quickest way to bring the conflict to a screeching halt.

Conclusion:

The Black Watch should be able to hold onto Speldorf until help arrives. Indeed, the German must be careful or these besieged troops could actually mount a substantial attack of their own. Were he to try to erase the Black Watch with a powerful assault on Speldorf, the much more dangerous relief column would be on him from the rear in a very few turns, to his ultimate doom.



Scenario 43

Action at Kommerscheidt

Rating: 45%-55% Pro-German

Attraction: Superior Wehrmacht forces rip into a mediocre American formation which is backed only by cunning deployment of ordnance and perhaps something more. Something unmeasurable. Something which brings a gleam to the eye of every GI. The Anvil is near. Fighter-bombers! THIS IS THE MAELSTROM!

American Advantages: HE. Stone Buildings. Height. P-47s (but of course).

Three mortars and offboard artillery provided the cornerstone of your defense. They must be employed against enemy infantry with the intent of so mangling their advance that the panzers will hesitate long enough on Board 5 for your P-47s to airmail a victory. In all likelihood the two Shermans

you do not place on hex 12DD2 will have opportunity to add to this HE wall of fire, provided you have placed them in the front line. But this will be detailed later.

In the majority of playings between evenly matched opponents the P-47s will be the key to victory or defeat. This is because they have so much to offer. If they appear early and are successful, it has been a short game and you have time to switch sides and play again; or play it the same way if the German feels particularly masochistic. If they have not appeared by Turn 6 or have stormed onboards and off again with no great effect, you will at least live to play another day (in most cases). However, if I put aside the scenario maiming accusations of the preceding, take a look at what can really happen in this encounter.

First of all, you went into this knowing that air power was available for one side only. Yet you decided to play. Was that because you felt lucky and counted on blowing away your adversary based on the availability or lack of fighter-bombers? I hardly think anyone possessing the acumen to play G.I. would risk wasting an evening (or maybe even a Saturday) just to annihilate someone based on that premise. Unless, of course, that game was taking place in Toledo, Ohio on a Wednesday night.

Second, now that it's agreed you knew this scenario was dangerous when you agreed to play it, you must realize that the turn of the P-47 arrival may very well be the single most important factor in this scenario. It is potentially more significant than the number of aircraft received, number of turns on board and quantity of victory points gained by their arrival turn. And you don't even have any control over it! This is because the P-47, even a single plane, which arrives at a time when an enemy force is about to blow away one of your positions, brings with it the power and freedom of delivery which enables it to eliminate that threat, be it infantry or panzer.

The stroke of luck which brings a fighter-bomber onboard at such a critical moment may catch the German at the peak of his offensive, at a time when he is unleashing forces which have labored with meticulous detail into positions from which they can deliver the winning assault. Destroying these forces with your terror from the skies can throw enemy timing off to such an extreme that his entire offensive may collapse. It may not be possible for him to position additional forces to replace those destroyed, resulting in the loss of everything he has labored for up to that point. This, of course, is above and beyond the immediate harm he suffers due to casualties sustained from the air attack itself.

American Disadvantages: P-47 Variables. Armor.

Actually, there are four ways to look at this. If the P-47s appear by Turn 5 or 6 and you have one of them for three or four turns, two for two or three turns, or three for one or two turns, you have the tools for the kind of game I've rated this scenario. If you have only one aircraft for less than three turns (the "fart in a skillet" syndrome) or only two for one turn, the rating should be more like 65% Pro-German.

If you receive no air support German chances soar to about 80%. In other words, only the complexity of this game system (i.e., the large number of opportunities you have to experience extremely good luck or that your opponent will not play a heads-up game) denies him a 100% possibility of victory. This despite the nine free victory points you would receive. Notice also that if a single plane enters the game on Turn 9 you will have ten victory points. Not much to cheer about though since the game probably ended on about the seventh turn.

Finally, if you receive two aircraft for four turns or three for three or four turns, it is you who enjoys a 55% victory rating. Maybe that should even be 60-65% with three aircraft onboard for four turns,

depending on their turn of arrival.

You must be careful to preserve your armor in the early going. Don't fritter away the Shermans before air support arrives. If you do, and then run into bad luck with the fighter-bombers, you'll have nothing left to oppose those panzers. The Germans will walk all over you. Take a look at what a bazooka does to frontal armor of a Panther. And that's all you'll see. This is where the Germans coined the phrase, "Make my day".

The tanks must be used with caution until you've seen the results of your air attack. Only then will you know whether it is safe to trade Sherman for Mark IV or take a chance at a Panther. Certainly, the brave souls manning the tank in hex 12DD2 simply must stick their necks out on that hill. But the other two M4s should play a cat-and-mouse game, shooting up infantry where possible, waiting for panzers to chance running across their sights and backing away when threatened. No need to feel like cowards. They will have their day.

American Set-Up:

Two things are certain. You want a Sherman in 12DD2 and the three MMGs, radio and accompanying leaders and squads in second-level stone buildings, probably 12R2 and P3. You have two choices with the balance of your force.

One plausible defense is to sit in town taking advantage of the buildings and string a few squads out on Board 5 to inject some caution into the enemy advance. Most of these troops will never again see Kimmerscheidt, but will buy a few turns for you to roll for fighter-bombers. If the P-47s arrive before the enemy reaches town you should be in good shape to make a game of it. Unfortunately, if the Germans reach town before air cover appears, you may find it impossible to hold your force together. A contributing factor to this dilemma is the fact that this is not that Board 3 village we have all come to know so well, with its combination of buildings, woods, walls and hedges offering substantial cover for ease of movement. No, this village is more difficult to attack, but it is also *many* times more difficult to defend. There is so much open ground that movement between buildings is often impossible. You will have to endure a fair number of isolated broken squads which no leader can reach.

The defense which I prefer is a strong line on Board 5 backed by the MMGs and 6-6-7s in 12R2 and 12P3. Typically, hexes to defend are C8, F8, I9, K9, S8, V8 and Z8. Bazookas go on the flanks as well as in town. The idea is to throw as much HE their way as time and space allow. Eventually the radio will break or lose contact and the mortars will be revealed, their crews finally spotted and nailed. But a fair amount of damage will have been done, as well as buying a good deal of valuable time.

This highlights an important decision. Do you set up the mortars for indirect fire or with hidden placement? My preference is the latter because of the -2 DRM for mortars on the "Revealed" Table, encumbered procedure of placing an FFE (it feels more natural to fire the gun direct), I'll take four shots on the 8 column over two on 12 column any day, and the availability of a good order leader for indirect fire is not certain (nor do I wish to tie up my valuable leaders directing mortar fire). The bonus is that any time I possess forces which the enemy can't see, an unmeasurable amount of doubt preys on his movements and gives me an advantage. I'll gladly take any advantage allowed in the game and by the standards of fair play.

The intent of the Board 5 defense is to fight a delaying action. This can, and I confess usually does, turn into a tooth-and-nail scramble for possession of the 5J10 to 5T10 area, which is the jump-off point for a German entrance into Kimmerscheidt. The 5C8 and 5F8 squads with bazookas are your most tenuous outposts. Yet they provide the only viable defense of the east edge I can devise. Backed by an M4 in 12G2 it is doubtful the

enemy can penetrate here without suffering. Unfortunately, these two squads will rarely live to see another sunrise. But you will appreciate what their sacrifice does for you.

German Advantages: Depth.

If there is any single element of the German force which gives you an advantage, it comes in mechanized form. However, these panzers are highly susceptible to annihilation from the sky and therefore are not listed as an advantage. They often provide the main course of an American aerial feast.

The wonder of it all is twofold. If airpower doesn't maul your panzers you will, of your own accord, maul the American armor. If, however, you are seriously hurt by the P-47s (or even mauled), you will at least have a few vehicles remaining. And here's the beauty of it all. You still possess the quantity and quality of infantry which can win the game. This is what is called Depth, with a capital *D*.

German Disadvantages: P-47s. Terrain.

Not meaning to beat this with an overly large stick, but the worst thing that can happen to you involves the P-47s. It should be obvious that they can ruin your game plan, throw off your timetable, demolish your wonderful armor and, in total, wreck your chances for victory. Other than that you don't have a lot to worry about.

Throughout this writing I have intentionally avoided listing any facet of a scenario as both an advantage for one side and a disadvantage for the other. This obviously saved a very large amount of repetition which would have made boring reading while serving no purpose. But in this scenario the P-47s are listed twice due to their overwhelming impact, the many and varied ways in which this impact can manifest itself in the encounter, and the simple fact that they truly are a detriment to the German in a manner which I do not consider a specific American advantage.

That reads like some kind of riddle. You will understand why when I tell you it is because the heretofore unmentioned German disadvantage is all psychological. You know those fighter-bombers are going to appear sooner or later. Do you go all out in hopes of putting the game away before they appear and risk being caught unprepared? Do you play cautious in anticipation of those demons screaming onboard and chance losing the initiative? Or do you float somewhere between these extremes, never fully committed to a single plan? Believe me, whichever path you choose there will be times you wish you had done it differently.

The terrain you must cross places you at a disadvantage due to the amount of HE the GI can deliver. If you try to knock out his front line from the 5H6 to 5N5 area, he can plaster you with FFE, mortars and possibly a Sherman or two. If you avoid this line, which is the only respectable infantry position you can assume in force until Turn 3, you have handed the enemy a full turn to respond to your board entrance. Of course, that may be the lesser of the two evils.

Your options are to use mounted assault through the forest road and aim for Turn 3 or 4 control of the 5Q9 area; or cross the east edge; or send armor in to stir things up and then follow with infantry creeping through the Board 5 woods mass. No matter how you look at it you will be forced to launch your guaranteed targets for American gunners. In short, it is so obvious the bulk of your infantry will enter east of 5O1 in order to avoid open terrain on the west half of that board, you are assured the GIs will be waiting for you exactly where you are intending to go. The alternative is dealt with in the following section.

German Assault:

Some of this was covered in the preceding discussion of terrain. Certainly you don't want to

park in the sights of that 12DD2 Sherman. However, if you discover that the armor leader is not in that particular tank you may grow a bit more flamboyant. If he is CE try throwing some infantry fire at him. Lay smoke in a hex blocking his vision. Do grievous damage to his friends on ground level to draw him off the hill. Don't just play into his hands by moving into sight in a direct challenge of "king of the hill". You will receive a crowning of an undesirable sort.

Your assault must consider measures of limiting the effects of aerial attack. A study of fighter-bomber technique reveals that your best recourse is to deploy in non-linear formation, presenting the fewest possible targets to aircraft. If you know there is only one fighter-bomber onboard this is simple. But the complexity geometrically increases with each additional aircraft. This is why your chances range from good to poor.

You should have relatively little trouble with US ground forces in the first few turns unless you stick everyone together where enemy HE can devastate you, such as in the 5H6 to 5N5 area. I recommend you take all three avenues through the woods. Send forces to the aforementioned woods line, others toward hex 5Q9 and at least a few along the F row to 5H10. This dispersal will tie down the majority of enemy squads and allow your tanks their maximum freedom of movement. In addition to denying any fat and juicy American FFE targets, it avoids the type of congregation which attracts fighter-bombers.

I am not keen on entering a large infantry force west of 5O1. True, there will not be many defenders to contend with in that woods line on your immediate front. But machinegun fire from 12DD2 and the village will prevent excessive open terrain movement. These positions will buy time for the balance of the GIs to shift westward, and you will be caught in the open facing the entire American army.

Conclusion:

At times the American reliance on bazookas, mortars and offboard artillery may parallel the effect of a carnival of gimcracks and geegeaws. But let a round or two land with accuracy and the whole tone of proceedings changes abruptly. Everybody knows the fighter-bombers can make or break this scenario. On those occasions when their presence makes the game a life or death struggle for both sides, you will know you have reached that plateau of gaming which brings you to the very apex of your hobby. And you may ask yourself, "Is this my profession?"



Scenario 44 Prelude to Breakout

Rating: 50%-50%

Attraction: A fast moving engagement between pure infantry formations with little else encumbering play. This is *G.I.* as we envisioned a game called *SQUAD LEADER* with advanced rules back in 1977. A true delight as both sides wonder how they ever got themselves into their respective predicaments.

German Advantages: The Canal. Random entrance of Reinforcements.

With only five squads initially it may appear insane to even think in terms of advantages. All the more reason to make the most of what little you do have.

You must play the Canal Game. The fords advertise where your enemy will most likely cross. If he opts to avoid them and wait for the engineers it is likely he will run out of time in the scenario. If he chooses this option be careful of twelve squads trying to blast you from the north side of the canal during the first few turns. It is best to pull away from such firepower and not try to blast anyone yourself until the engineers arrive and attempt to place those duckboards. Then you should blast.

But in all probability somebody is going to come through the fords. They are also preceded by some pretty nasty FFE which precludes any high power concentration of force in the ford area. Besides, if the Yanks see a preponderance of your squads within range of the north bank of the canal, they will be only too happy to set up shop and trade shots with you. If you let them kill a few of your squads in the first few turns there will be nothing left to oppose them when he finally does cross that canal.

The bottom line is this: sure, you should oppose the actual canal crossing with a squad or two and some phony positions. But the advantage is that you know he desperately wants to cross at the M7 ford. When he does he will be facing a defense in depth from 4M10 to 4S2. Crossing the S and T rows will be a problem for him, meaning the ultimate struggle will almost always be for the buildings in the southwest quarter of the battlefield. And that is where you are waiting for him.

Although it is an inconvenience not knowing where the reinforcements will enter it can also drive the GI player to distraction. He will have to cover the board edge flank of his crossing point in anticipation of the arrival of reinforcements. This could turn out to be wasted effort if they appear on the other side of the battlefield. Even if there are enemy troops in the vicinity of your entrance it is probably only a screening force. You should have the option of launching a counterattack or of moving to join the balance of your defenders.

German Disadvantages: Quantity.

You cannot afford to lose many squads. This is particularly true during the first four turns when you have only five of them. Take solace in the fact the GIs have a very difficult terrain objective. You can afford to yield ground every turn and still win. Until you've reached the point of your final stand—somewhere in the south center of Board 4—you should back away from almost every firefight. If you find yourself in a situation which seems to demand that you duke it out, ask yourself whether you can kill two GI factors for every one factor you stand to lose. The answer will be most enlightening.

German Set-Up:

It should already be apparent I am no advocate of front line defense at the canal. As you play this scenario over and over, alternate between a one- or two-squad front line (J10 and N9 for example) and a non-existent line using concealment counters.

Try to entrench in hexes O3 and T4. Put a squad with LMG in Y9 to deny that board 6Y row road to the engineers. Place the remaining squads not already on front line duty in the center of Board 4. Hexes such as N5, R5 and R7 allow them to monitor and respond to enemy movement without themselves being targets of killing fire. Best spot for the radio is T4. From here it covers both the east-west and north-south corridors the GIs must cross. This is why the MMG should also be here. It is also why entrenching this position is very important.

Do you get the impression I like this position? In fact, I like it so much I would definitely start a squad in R7 for the express purpose of laying smoke

in S7 to screen T4 from that deadly GI position at 6R2. Three squads, two MMGs and a -1 leader there can spell curtains for hex 4T4 prior to successful entrenchment. Another squad should eventually enter T4 if it is entrenched.

American Advantages: Firepower.

You begin with almost two-to-one infantry firepower superiority. Given the opportunity you can simply muscle your way to victory. But this could only happen against a green German commander. The battle-tested veteran who usually sits across the table is going to force you to use finesse to win this one. He will not willfully allow your stacks and MMGs to subdue him in a firefight. You will have to do some leg work, throw smoke, draw fire with sacrificial lambs and weave your way across puzzling terrain in order to finally pull all that wonderful firepower into a position where the enemy is at last forced to give battle.

In the meantime, any who oppose you will be overwhelmed by attacks on the 12 FP and higher columns. The thing to avoid, of course, is setting up a target for enemy FFE. Avoid congregating in LOS of suspected or confirmed radio locations and you should have a relatively surprise-free game [whatever that is].

American Disadvantages: Victory Conditions.

Only because enemy intelligence has divined your objectives do five squads pose a serious threat to victory. The force under your command wields enough power to crush the German defender 90% of the time. The only problem is that crushing him has nothing to do (directly) with the victory condition. Should the scenario end with a German force in utter chaos but no American victory, consensus of opinion will rule that your opponent played the more skillful game, denying you victory despite staggering losses. Even though he values his squads at one for every two of yours, they are still expendable at that rate.

The point of all this revolves around the very difficult task to control all but two of the Board 4 building hexes. The enemy knows you must eventually break his stronghold in the south center of this board to win, and that you will cross terrain conducive to his machine gun fire trying to reach buildings which otherwise appear easy marks. Don't be fooled by such mirages. This scenario runs nine turns for very good reason. Plan to use all of those turns to win.

American Advance:

There is absolutely nothing wrong with moving up to the fords and either crossing immediately or blasting any targets on the far bank for a turn or two. But it does involve some coordination with your artillery bombardment which probably came in one of three forms.

First, you may have hoped to blast the south bank with HE. Any defenders there stand a fair chance of breaking, or at least they may be revealed. Second, you might have tried HE elsewhere on Board 4. Hexes O3, P6, T4 and Y9 are all locations likely to contain substantial enemy forces. Finally, you could have hit the south bank with smoke in order to cover an immediate crossing. This is especially handy if you want to try crossing at 7D7 or 7Q7.

Eight times out of ten I will choose to lay smoke with the FFEs. I believe crossing the canal quickly in order to press the German is vital, and the smoke provides nice insurance. This immediate crossing also allows my engineers to drop those cumbersome duckboards and proceed with all speed to the fords themselves.

On those occasions you want to try using the duckboards, realize that time will become your biggest worry. This is because it will require seven or eight squads to effectively cover the engineers placing those bridges. The other four or five squads might cross unopposed at 7D7 or even try M7. But

they are not going to do much good until your main force is onto Board 4. You will still struggle for possession of the southern buildings and, due to fooling with the bridges, will be in time trouble. If you choose this path, rate the scenario 60% Pro-German.

Conclusion:

The absence of any positions higher than ground level (6J8 is too far from the action to be of use) does two things. First, it prepares you for the LOS problems to be encountered in Scenario 45. In Scenario 44 with all those Board 4 wheatfields in season, it creates so much blocking terrain that the entire board is subject to becoming the focal point of battle. This is because it is rare that one side can control movement of the other. There are almost always alternate directions to take when one path proves too treacherous or one position too tenuous to hold. Flanking maneuvers abound and the winner should be he who improvises alternate tactics the quickest.



Scenario 45 Hide and Seek

Rating: 45%-55% Pro-Allied

Attraction: Dreadfully close terrain allows for some long distance sprinting on occasion and greatly reduces the American four-hex inherent range disadvantage. Coupled with armor support, the GIs have a slim advantage over a superior German infantry force hunkered down in entrenchments and behind hedgerows.

German Advantages: Machineguns. Concealment. Snipers.

With four medium and heavy machineguns you can enjoy the luxury of starting one in a position you would not normally even consider and waiting for something grand to happen. Six LMGs don't hurt a bit as 40% of your basic infantry firepower comes from the ten machineguns. Were it not for hedgerows and lack of upper level positions, the killing power at eight- to sixteen-hex ranges these guns provide would swing the balance in your favor. But, historically, the GIs would then have committed additional forces to the assault or else we probably would not have been treated to this encounter.

Twenty concealment counters again. Refer to what was said about this same German advantage in Scenario 42. Remember to place a phony stack or two in the rear so all twenty counters won't be quickly revealed, to the benefit of American intelligence. Use either the concealment counters or real units under concealment to create a ghost force. Locate this force away from the main engagement. Hex 6A4 to 6E2 is good. Either woodlot on the south edge of Board 6 will do nicely. Their objective is to remain concealed until sometime after midgame when they realize an opportunity to move in and retake or at least seriously threaten one of the American controlled victory buildings.

Since the GI doesn't know what value you have assigned that building he will have to defend it, probably assuming it if you move in with only concealment counters he will take great pains to protect the building, provided at least one of your squads is

still concealed somewhere on board. The effort he diverts may cause an assault elsewhere to collapse.

Those snipers pose a serious threat, specifically for American leaders already in short supply. There are so many places they can hide they may never be found. Their importance cannot be overemphasized, for out of nowhere, even on the first move of the game there may be a dead 9-1 on the ground and the entire assault will be in danger of collapse.

German Disadvantages: Anti-Tank Weaponry. Time.

Unless the GI tank commanders are cocky enough to give battle CE there is only one Psk which can hurt them from more than one-hex distance. It is unlikely they will move adjacent so you will probably have to live with them. Nevertheless, be alert for any lone tank which could be surrounded by PFs and squads. It may be worth risking a few squads, especially if elimination of a Sherman will implement Special Rule 45.3 at that particular moment.

Time is not your friend at all. Apart from the obvious fact that ten turns give the Americans little reason to abandon any caution in their advance, the length of this scenario works directly against two of your three advantages. That is, the longer the game runs the fewer Concealment counters you will retain and the more likely those Snipers will be spotted and nullified.

This showcases the relative effort of such items. Quite naturally, the longer the scenario the less overall influence these transitory features will have on the outcome. Concealment in a five-turn scenario will carry a greater share of the defensive burden than in a ten-turn scenario simply because it is in place for a higher percentage of the game. With a Sniper it is somewhat more complex. He may have proved his worth with a single bullet. Still, the more time his prey enjoys to stalk him, the less dynamic will be his contribution.

German Set-Up:

Between hedgerows, woods, buildings, entrenchments and concealment there is almost no place within your set-up area which cannot be made to sustain a solid defense. However, you normally want positions offering maximum field of fire, and this is no exception.

There are four separate problems to consider in this set-up and I've already discussed one of them, the "ghost force." The others are: where will the GIs advance; how strongly should each victory building be defended; how can men and material be positioned to deal with the Shermans and also enemy infantry once they breach the outer defenses and are milling about the center of Board 6, rolling death with every throw of the dice?

You will know where the enemy is advancing by his set-up. Without even seeing his set-up I'm willing to bet he's coming through 6K2—and 95% of the time will have a second, smaller group coming through the 6V1-6Z1 area. But greed will get you nowhere here. If you position the bulk of your troops directly in front of enemy columns, he will idly trade a few shots with you, (who wouldn't with the firepower these units field at close range?) blast the Shermans into your rear and cut you down from behind. So you need defense in depth.

Hex 6K8 is by far the easiest building to defend. However, it is also in the path of the #1 enemy route to victory. In contrast, building 6X8 is not easy to defend, but the route any GI assault must take to each the environs of that building is very difficult indeed. Therefore, you should strongly defend 6K8 itself, and strongly defend the approaches to 6X8. Building 6K4 is simply not worth a strong defense of any sort. If you try to hold it, you will give away too much elsewhere. Again, this should read like defense in depth is what you want.

Finally, the best defense against those Shermans is, you guessed it, defense in depth. No GI com-

mander in his right mind will send tanks into hedgerow country on their own so long as enemy infantry is lurking on all sides. Make him work hard to bring in the tanks. You don't want large stacks for 75mm targeting. You want a shotgun effect with a squad behind every hedgerow and a machinegun in every woods or building.

American Advantages: Armor.

Three things give you a chance to win this encounter. They all enter the east edge of Board 14 on Turn 1. If you like taking chances with armor this is not a scenario for you. If you lose a tank in the first three turns or lose two before Turn 8, I will be amazed if you win. It will mean you truly have made the German pay dearly for knocking out those Shermans and should be congratulated.

Provided you deny panzerfaust and panzerschreck shots and remain buttoned, these three Shermans come as close to the invulnerable mobile gun decks any tank designer ever imagined. Think of them in that frame of mind and they will serve you well. If you try to use them to bust open German positions by moving adjacent or actually attempting to overrun, be prepared for disappointment. Naturally enough, these tactics may be forced on you if time is running out. But stay a few hexes away from enemy infantry as long as possible.

American Disadvantages: Leadership. Special Rule 45.3.

This is the most pathetic leadership/squad ratio in all of *G.I.* At least when the Russians try to mount an offensive with a single – 1 leader they use about thirty or forty squads. Not so the American. Twelve squads and a cloud of smoke, something they'll be using extensively to screen that precious 9-1 from the sniper's sights.

Whatever you do, don't risk those leaders. Can you think of any previous scenario in which a 7-0 played such an important role as this one? Here, he will usually trail the main group through 6K2 area, picking up broken squads as he goes. This is not to say that the 9-1 is necessarily "leading" the attack. He is probably somewhere near the front lending his – 1 to the MMC but not actually leading those foremost squads through virgin territory. They may suffer a bit at his tentative demeanor, but would panic at his early demise. That poor group plodding down the Board 6 Z-column has only an 8-0 to guide them from behind. Everybody knows they are playing a safe game. Certainly no chances will be taken with the leader.

Special Rule 45.3 adds even more caution to your advance. How can you ever do anything spectacular in this engagement when everything seems stacked against you, ready to collapse like a house of cards? To be sure, you shouldn't even attempt anything spectacular until you've either attained an ELR of 4 or at least built up some cushion. More on this follows.

American Advance:

The GIs face a series of critical obstacles which, like stepping stones, must be tackled one at a time on the road to victory. That these are not necessarily encountered in any pre-set order is a function of their scenario dilemma.

One is the problem created by Special Rule 45.3. American forces cannot advance without caution, including the Shermans, for fear of a few fatal German rolls spelling doom in the form of a 2 ELR, which would guarantee an unprecedented erosion of their cohesion as a fighting unit. Their immediate objective, therefore, is to destroy a few German squads quickly, to either establish a 4 ELR or at least provide a little breathing room. Of course the German will set-up with this in mind, either holding back so the American is forced to proceed with extreme caution for many turns or somehow devising a trap to nail him where he may not expect it. To be safe the GI must expect it everywhere.

The snipers pose another threat, particularly for American leaders. This has been covered in preceding sections. The final word is, don't run that 9-1 across open ground!

This alludes to the third stepping stone, which is created by US leadership. If there are not two wings in your assault the German has been given an added advantage. The problem for the GI is, how to advance on separate flanks with only one legitimate leader? Whichever flank is carried by the 8-0 or 7-0 is at a large disadvantage from the word go.

I do not insist you must always split your force; but if you don't, you must be prepared for a very difficult time against all twelve enemy squads and both snipers concentrated along your sole avenue of approach. At least with your troops split the German will also split, allowing your Shermans to get in the middle and bounce back and forth as needed, keeping the enemy off balance and cutting his lines of movement between defending groups. In this way, with the Germans spread out, these tanks can concentrate wherever you want, never facing all twelve enemy squads at once.

Of course the final hurdle involves taking those three buildings. Make no mistake, you must plan to take all three since point values are not revealed until game end. Building 6K4 may look like a piece of cake, and it is. But it is as important as the other two. Suppose a sly German has made it the two-point building. Should you pass beyond it without leaving a defender or two, German forces may slip around and grab it back. The German will be devious, and this must be kept in mind.

Conclusion:

A very great deal depends on the first few casualties and the snipers. These are at once two of the major causes of excitement, as well as the two factors which may detract from this encounter in the eyes of some. Admittedly, the standard 6-6-6 squads are often a bother due to the ease with which they break. In contrast, these 7-4-7s are a joy, especially in hedgerow country and with absence of level 2 positions where a four-hex range is the norm instead of the extreme and therefore not much of a disadvantage. But should they develop a 2 ELR, the growing population of green units may be too much for some gamers to take.

Also, there is little in the system more frustrating than seeing your only 9-1 shot or pinned down by a sniper you can't even locate. For the sniper himself there is nothing more frustrating than watching that same 9-1 skate across open ground through a 1 (-4) die roll! I call it frustrating but it also reads "exciting" for the other player.

Suffice it to say these two factors draw a very fine line between maintaining an acceptable balance on one hand and an unavoidable German win on the other. I believe the US can walk the tightrope to a win, but he must be very alert and play a very smart game. This scenario will be enjoyed to the fullest only by the diehards. At this point, they are probably the only ones still playing anyway.



Scenario 46
Operation Varsity
Rating: 45%–55% Pro-German

Attraction: Fortunes of war bring feast and famine to both sides. GIs floating to mother earth greet death square in his face. Once landed they dish out the same to a token German "At Start" contingent. By midgame the defense is bolstered and soldiers of German birth are in the driver's seat, literally. Madness, madness.

German Advantages: Descending Targets. Superior Numbers. Armor.

As your enemy drops from the sky he is completely at your mercy. By all means pick on the leaders first. Every leader killed means decreased rally capabilities for the GIs. Even if you can only break the 9-1, this is a great boon provided you can keep him under fire for a turn or two and clamp DM status on him.

Because of drift you will often have occasion to eliminate the only squad or leader capable of reaching a valuable support weapon. Since there are eight such GI weapons landing here realization of this phenomenon is almost certain. This is something you must simply keep your eye open to see.

The only thing which prevents eleven 7-4-7s from blowing you away by Turn 3 is their initial dispersal. You will be in trouble wherever squads land such that several can join up immediately. Unless you are defending what you perceive to be the assembly point itself, there is more to be gained by preserving your squads than defending the position.

This leads nicely into the trick of how you manage to develop superior numbers over a foe who has you convincingly outnumbered at the outset. Some of his advantage may be eliminated at once as you gun down helpless parachutists. But the key is preservation of your squads. You will eventually attain numerical superiority only if you forsake positions the American seems to want. With the fire power he can throw at you by Turn 3 there is not much you can do to stop him anyway. Better to be patient until Turn 6 when you will have the initiative and the strength to counterattack.

A great deal of that strength comes from the only armor in this battle. These two AFVs give you the ability to strike swiftly with sufficient power to wreck any defensive position. They make any of the assembly points susceptible to attack by either direct assault or bombardment from a distance. If this armor is lost your chances fade drastically.

German Disadvantages: Quality.

On paper your fourteen squads and armor support appear adequate to defend the drop area despite availability of only two – 1 leaders and a bothersome shortage of machine guns. Unfortunately, due to surrender rules, green unit replacement and an ELR of 2, this paper force is subject to folding. This is one reason why retreat is advisable in the early going. It is preferable to surrendering or turning green. Should your "At Start" group fall apart, there be nothing for the reinforcements to use as a focal point for their counterattack. This will put them at such a disadvantage they may be committed to battle piecemeal and never establish a coordinated attack.

With a possibility of four separate groups, the one thing you can ill afford is lack of coordination. Imagine how beautiful it would be if all reinforcements entered at the same hex, linked up with your "At Start" remnants and pushed on to victory. You will probably never realize such a scenario, but should make the net effect your goal.

For the most part you are going to experience an unacceptable number of green units. All you can do is try to avoid those large American stacks in the early going. They are what threaten to kill or green you.

German Set-Up:

Remember two things as you set up. You can't cover all six buildings and you must preserve your troops. There are some obvious spots you could

place the entire "At Start" group and be reasonably certain they will all be safe for many turns. But you want to take advantage of as many shots at descending paratroopers as possible. You also want to be as close to all six potential assembly buildings as possible. Surely this calls for a defense centered on hex 4S2.

Terrain in the area defined by 4M2-4V3-14X8-14L9 will shield you from GI fire better than any other central location. The amount of this rather large area you can successfully defend may steadily dwindle throughout this confrontation, depending on whether or not you block the path of any GIs. But it does fill your needs well in that you are poised to hit them in the sky and situated in cover which allows you to maintain a presence onboard until help arrives.

But, you say, this wonderful set-up does have two drawbacks, hexes 4I10 and 5I9. You are not well situated to defend or retake either of these buildings. Building 5I9 will be extremely difficult to retake. However, look at a few redeeming features. Due to the lay of Boards 4 and 5, paradrops aimed at 5I9 are much more accident-prone than any of the other buildings. That is, each group runs a 50% chance of landing far from 5I9. If the intended drop point is in the I row of Board 5, there is a 50% chance it will shift all the way across board to the I row of Boards 4 or 12. This is why 5I9 is not impossible for you to retake. Played over and over with this building as the assembly point, the average situation will find half the GIs landing about as far from where they want to touch down as possible.

Building 4I10 poses other difficulties for the GIs. As with 5I9 it is highly accident-prone due to close proximity to Board 5 and the three full clear terrain hexes anybody landing on the north of Board 14 must cross to get there (I7, I8 and I9 for example). In addition, your own troops are in position to utilize the best route to 4I10 if a counter-attack is needed.

Actual hexes for set-up are 12X, 12S9, 12L9, 4M2, 4P1 and 4V3. The MMG goes in 12S9 and LMGs in 4M2 and 4V3. Leaders must be in the center, possibly at 4P1 and 12T10. Not unexpectedly those three AA guns are most difficult to place if only because there are so many locations available. Look at 12T6 and 4T4 for hidden placement of the smaller guns. Your V-size gun may want to begin in 4S3 hooked up to a truck.

As reinforcements begin to arrive you must decide whether they should be used to bolster your defenses or immediately go over on the offensive, perhaps hitting the GIs from a new direction altogether. This will be dictated by location of the victory building, your own losses sustained and the point of entrance of those reinforcements. Some of these reinforcements may find themselves in a bad way if their entrance hex is covered by enemy fire. In such a case the Advance Phase may provide your only viable method to enter. This would be a setback, but at least it does tie up enemy units and there often is nothing you can do about it anyway.

The overall game plan, as suggested earlier, is to bring on the reinforcements in such a manner that they compliment the efforts of your "At Start" troops. These latter may be in a position to take up the offensive—or they may not. Either way you should have them situated such that whatever support remains theirs to give can be brought to bear on the GIs as those reinforcements start pouring in. That is, even if they elected to hide for a few turns when they fought alone, they must be available to leap into offensive gear when called upon by arrival of their comrades.

American Advantages: Surprise.

Surprise is really all you can brag about. For three and a half turns you are the only one who knows where the final battle will take place. That time should be invested in securing defensive positions around the assembly building. This is initially

more important than taking that building itself due to the ease with which these outlying areas will fall. But as soon as you attempt to take one of the six buildings, and it happens to be defended, there is no more surprise and all positions around that building will be defended much more vigorously.

Depending on German set-up your drop from the sky can be a ruse of sorts. That is, you might attempt to drop in an area which allows subsequent movement to more than one potential assembly point. The German set-up described above was designed to limit this ploy, but there are still such drop areas available. Unfortunately, most of them run the risk of landing units offboard.

Nevertheless, you get to see the enemy set-up and the general flavor of your drop will at least partially be in the area you want it. Some of those 7-4-7s will form up, and any time that happens your opponent knows he has a fight on his hands.

American Disadvantages: Dispersal. Range. Time.

Dispersal comes in two forms. You know the paratroops will scatter all over their intended drop zones. But they can also be dispersed into errant drop points. Either way, it will take at least one turn to organize locally, longer for some groups. You may even suffer the embarrassment of dropping a group directly on the defenders. In any case errant groups will serve a useful purpose as German troops move to prevent a link-up. An errant group might also land such that it can delay enemy reinforcements. The only worthwhile practice to follow is the historical approach. Form up as best you can and make for the action.

As has happened before, inherent range of these 7-4-7s is a limiting factor in their ability to defend a position. Beyond four hexes they are individually worth only a 4-4-7 and are inferior to a 4-6-7 at five- and six-hex ranges. The mortars and RCLs alleviate this dilemma to a degree, but fall short of providing the immediacy of squad fire.

This range disadvantage is particularly damaging because of the vast areas of open terrain on Boards 4 and 14. On Board 4 this open ground is largely due to lack of wheatfields. So maybe German agriculture programs were years ahead of their US counterparts as, way back in 1945, they obviously were paying farmers to not grow crops. This is an aspect of German war society which historians have not yet even taken into consideration.

Finally, every turn after the last Germans enter the board will be miserable for you. Unless you have a "won" game he will be taking position after position and it will actually be only a matter of time until the assembly building itself falls to him. Your job is to see to it that he doesn't succeed before game end. Even if you have fought a skillful game, broken paratroopers are scattered here and there and your defense is something which has mostly just "happened" as opposed to anything planned. These problems were caused by the time constraint placed on you to take the assembly building before your adversary was made aware of it and before he gathered sufficient forces to do anything about it. So don't feel too bad if your defensive posture is less than admirable. Just so it works!

American Attack:

Under the right circumstances you may actually find it tempting to drop on one of the German defenses and smother it. Unless he is spread out so far that neighboring squads can't come to the rescue in one turn, don't try it. Remember that at least one part of your force, maybe more, will not land where you plan. Instead of smothering the defense you may be setting him up to obliterate you. If those "At Start" Germans do that, you may as well quit and go back to *RAIL BARON*.

In all likelihood your opponent will assume a position similar to that described in preceding sections. Your best bet is to drop away from his congregation. An unencumbered drop will give you

time to organize on the ground. Remember that reinforcements will not become active until Turn 4 at the earliest, giving you a minimum of two turns to pretty much do as you please. Your biggest single concern, Reinforcement Group 3, won't be doing anything until Turn 5 or 6.

Once landed, formed-up and successfully occupying the assembly building, there are three things which must be done to secure a defense. Expand your perimeter, dig entrenchments and grow Concealment. If you are short of units, it may be necessary to create some half squads in order to cover all angles. But this should be a last resort only.

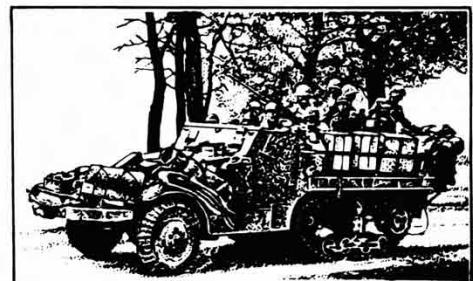
Some GIs will land far from their intended drop point. They are still an integral part of an assault force possessing sufficient strength to crush a weak German initial defense. Remember to treat them as such and they will benefit you greatly. Don't assume they are lost and madly rush them across open terrain or blindly into enemy strongpoints. German troops will treat them as they do those GIs who made their intended drop zones—with all due respect.

Indeed, with GIs coming at him from two or more directions there may be nothing the German commander wants more than to hide from your onslaught. I balk at suggesting dispersal could be a blessing in disguise in this manner, but at least it is not all bad. Pressure from several directions at once may be all it takes to force the enemy to prematurely relinquish a vital position or to sound general retreat before it is actually necessary.

Conclusion:

This might be called the scenario of German Advantages and American Disadvantages. Why then does it carry only a 55% Pro-German rating? It is due to the single German Disadvantage. An ELR of 2 has "nightmare" written all over it. How many 4-3-6s and 2-3-6s can the German stand?

The see-saw effect of this confrontation is admittedly confusing, yet provides a large share of the excitement. Each side has a few turns to plaster the other and if only those drop points aren't 100% accurate or 100% inaccurate, a winner will be decided only after nine or ten turns.



Scenario 47 Encircling The Ruhr

Rating: 50%-50%

Attraction: This whole concept of a two-parter in which the outcome of Part I directly affects Part II is intriguing. Part I features an invincible GI Task Force hurling itself at thin, but stiff, SS resistance to pierce their line as a hot knife through butter. Part II sends the remnants of that force against well-prepared defenses of yet another SS group. It is time for the American Commander to hold the reins loose.

German Advantages: Expendable Part I Force. Stone Buildings in Part II. Morale.

Nothing can be gained or lost by the condition of your Part I troops at the end of six turns. Turns 5 and 6 will usually see them trying some risky

maneuvers in order to either prevent those ten US AFVs/squads from exiting or to damage whatever else they can for the ultimate benefit of your Part II chances.

This is not necessarily limited to Turns 5 and 6 either. If there is reasonable chance of knocking out a tank or stack of squads, it is generally advised that you try it, even at considerable risk to yourself. This is because every GI piece eliminated is one less than will appear in Part II. Loss of any or all of your Part I force is as nothing compared to lightening your Part II burden.

Once Part II begins you immediately enjoy an improved situation due not only to having more men and material but, most importantly, thanks to level 2 stone buildings. Coupled with SS morale these buildings make you extremely tough to subdue.

German Disadvantages: Outnumbered.

You are woefully outnumbered in Part I. It is not even close. Part II is not as bad and will vary according to the outcome of the first part. Generally, you will still be at about 3-to-2 infantry disadvantage and a 2-to-1 shortage of tanks.

But, of course, you are supposed to be at a numerical disadvantage in Part I so that play can eventually reach Part II. The only question is how much damage you cause the GIs and diminish their chances to win the second half. The first group has no choice other than to set-up as a blocking force. Even if they tried to fight as a concentrated group, GI firepower could blow them away or else enter the other side of Board 5 and outflank them. In any case, such a congregation would not allow you to take advantage of the many positions which can serve you well. Of course this will be detailed in the following section.

In the second part, numerical inferiority will not be so painful because it does not bring with it inferiorities of support weapons and armor as was the case in Part I. Your machineguns and anti-tank support weapons are actually superior; between two Panthers and a 75L ATG you give away nothing but quantity to American tanks. If one or two of them were destroyed in Part I you don't even give away that much.

German Set-Up:

Where does the Roadblock go? Hex Y1 on the Y2/Y1 hexside are the obvious choices. You can bottle up the only north-south road and prevent trucks loaded with infantry from exiting the north edge. Defenders from 4P1 to 4BB1 will prevent enemy trucks from taking the detour road or bypassing thru 4Z0 and 4AA1. Anybody trying to remove this Roadblock must withstand considerable pressure from infantry in surrounding woods. Panzerfausts do nicely in a close situation such as this. Even ATMs may be useful.

Another interesting location to roadblock is the Z8/AA8 hexside. Since trucks can't cross a hedge they will spend two turns exiting from 4FF5 if the roadblock is not removed. Generally speaking, this is more time than they will have. Any other route will also take them extra turns to exit.

It is obvious that this roadblock must be placed to block the opponent's advance. What you must remember is to position yourself such that you are ready to hit him when he attempts to remove the obstacle. This is straightforward if you have blocked that 4Y1 pass. If you blocked the hedge road, it will involve occupying 4CC6 and/or 4Y9 and also possibly posting a hidden ATG or else placing the ATG on Hill 522.

Take a look at hex W5 for your ATG. Woods in W4 nicely shield you from enemy infantry fire, and you are not terribly susceptible to HE fire (read 145.3 thru 145.34 very carefully). You will enjoy a good number of shots before overwhelmed, or can always bail out into any of the six adjacent hexes and live to fight another turn, although sans the

+2 "emplaced" modifier. You can be sure those HTs will stay away while you occupy W5.

Put the PSW in J6 and the SPW in W6. Hex FF1 is another excellent spot for that ATG. Hidden, it can deliver underbelly shots at any AFV emerging from the Board 5 gully, and still enjoys a wide range of shots in eastern Board 4. I do not deny there are at least fifty other worthwhile locations for this gun such as Z3, AA4, CC6 and so on. You will wish for ten such guns before Part I is ended. However, with only one available, I believe it simply must set-up to defend the area east of Hill 522.

Likewise, viable infantry positions abound. The 9-1 leader with squad and MMG go in P6 level 1. From here they control the center and are capable of moving to either flank. Those other two squads should be in X1 and AA1 with several PFs, a Psk and maybe some ATMs, provided this is where you have blocked the road. These squads are almost guaranteed PF and Psk shots. Afterwards they can run away if possible. If no armor confronts them immediately they may have already bought that time which will bring victory.

Other hexes worth consideration are D1, G1, G3, P1, T3, O5, U7, Y9, and CC6. If only you had infantry to cover all of these! Don't hesitate starting Cpl. Cullop (your 7-0) somewhere around U5 or U7. He must bide his time until the American advance is seen. Then he will know which direction to take.

Part II is much similar to what we've seen before. Here you field a legitimate defense actually capable of stopping the enemy. Since that enemy must cross an entire board before reaching you, I would start all machineguns in level 2 buildings. Say, the HMG in P3, MMGs in R2 and M3. Hexes O6 and V4 are other key spots. Your ATG and AA guns have a wide variety of set-up locations available. Their position will largely be determined by point values assigned to buildings. These guns must set-up hidden to best protect those buildings worth three victory points.

Your Panthers are as icing on a cake. Their threat is often as good as a bite. Use them cautiously, but not to such a degree that your infantry is decimated. To win you need both infantry and armor available for all eight turns as it is doubtful your opponent will run shy of either.

American Advantages: Completely overwhelming in Part I. Firepower.

You should blow out the SS in Part I. Most importantly, if you take everything from the start of Part I with you into Part II, you wield better than a two-to-one firepower advantage there. This kind of firepower has become a common occurrence for the GIs. Naturally enough, there will be losses in Part I and delayed units as well. Still, you enter Board 6 with a decided firepower advantage and by Turn 4 will be in the two- to one-hex range, barring excess losses to that point.

One trap to avoid in Part I is wastefulness. This scenario began playtesting with a five-turn Part I. The time burden on American board exit forced them to sacrifice men and material in order to blast through positions quickly and move offboard. Since this published version features a six-turn Part I, you enjoy a bit more time to properly assault major positions instead of being forced to simply barge through.

American Disadvantages: None in Part I. Time in Part II.

You may run short of time in Part II due to the care which must be exerted crossing Board 6 and the deplorable fact that you don't know which buildings you want to take until they are already taken. You must take anywhere from three to five of the six victory buildings. Notice also that eight points-worth must be held at scenario end, meaning you must defend these buildings once they are yours.

It will take two or three turns to advance most of

your infantry to Board 12, leaving only five or six turns to complete their mission. This is not a generous amount of time in view of the defense you face. One thing which will somewhat alleviate your time problem is AFV bombardment of enemy machinegun positions. This should begin on Turn 1. It will grant your infantry some relief and employs the tanks well without bringing them within range of enemy infantry and those wicked PFs.

American Attack:

Part I is where you have fun. These GIs will demolish their enemy but it must be done intelligently or unnecessary casualties will be sustained.

There is no denying the appeal of an assault on German positions defending a 4Y1 roadblock. But don't go in without infantry support. On Turn 1, squads can be dismounted into 5S8 thru 5X8 and even advance onto the road if enemy defenses allow. Turn 2 will see a combined arms effort against 4Y1 and should end with a Pershing adjacent to the roadblock.

The trucks should get to 5W8 to 5V8 with six squads loaded and await the outcome of battle. These will have to move by Turn 4, or else the squads should debark and leg it offboard. If this involves leaving any MMGs on board your trucks, don't be too concerned. The trucks may still get offboard. For one thing they are much less tempting targets with no squads aboard. If they don't exit, at least they will enter Part II on Turn 3 and will move freely to your position at that point.

Basically you must eliminate those German AFVs, or at least frighten them away. Unfortunately they usually come back to haunt you and play hide-and-seek. Send your infantry into the 4U1 woods mass and advance on either or both sides of Hill 522 to reach the Y9 area and exit. Moving through the O6 area will be more difficult, as the German probably has his 9-1 and MMG there, and it will take you almost one complete turn longer than the western route due to being worried by Germans in P1 and T3. I do not recommend any serious advance along the east edge, but sending a few tanks that way is fine.

Above all shield your trucks from enemy fire and keep HTs away from PFs, the ATG and PSW. If the ATG is hidden, don't allow side shots from probable locations and don't go through the gully. If you lose one tank to this gun your opponent will consider it a small victory within the total scenario, his personal morale will rise, you will be depressed and life will be one tank more difficult in Part II.

On Turn 6 you will make some important decisions. Do you rush everybody offboard, accepting whatever casualties accrue? Or do you send off only enough to win this phase and anybody else who runs no risk doing so?

Your actions should be determined by the units in question. Don't ever risk a tank. A tank entering Part II on Turn 3 will be in the action on Turn 3. Missing two turns is nothing compared to maybe not having the vehicle at all. Also never risk a truck loaded with infantry. This, I think, requires no further explanation. Always risk an empty truck if you have exited infantry which require Part II transport. Halftracks could also be risked in this situation. Infantry can usually be risked unless you are already short of manpower and the risk involves moving in the open against anything greater than a "Column 1" attack. A broken squad which will enter Part II on Turn 4 is not much worse than entering on Turn 3 compared to the chance of a Turn 1 appearance.

Quite naturally, anytime you risk something it involves varying degrees of risk. It also involves the quantity of pieces you are risking versus the number of chances your opponent has to harm you. For example, if the GI has three squads which might exit

and enemy fire can hit only one of the three, the GI would be a fool not to try it. However, and here's where it gets complicated, if the GI already has plenty of infantry offboard or more than his exited vehicles can carry, he may as well hold these three squads in position and bring them in on Turn 3. Likewise, he may opt to play it safe if he is seriously short of infantry. He needs probably ten squads minimum in Part II for victory. What turn they arrive is less important than quantity at that point. After all, those pieces entering on Turns 3 and 4 will advance rapidly because GIs which entered on Turn 1 are bearing the brunt of enemy fire and also applying effective pressure of their own.

Your attack in Part II can move across the east, center on west of Board 6. Probably, it will be through two of these three, almost always including the center. Unlike Part I there are three very serious obstacles in your path this time. All three of them are German 75MM guns of one type or the other. You will lose a few tanks this time around. This is why it was so important to not lose any in Part I. After opposing armor has been traded off to a point mutually acceptable and each side enters the stage of avoiding any more confrontations, you must emerge with functioning tanks. Quite simply, this is because your infantry will singlehandedly carry the day only against an SS force already defeated. Infantry alone will not prove sufficient to destroy an active SS in command of stone buildings.

Conclusion:

This scenario reaches its apex on Turns 7 and 8. Pershings and Panthers stalk each other in village streets and between buildings. Opposing infantry struggle to control every hex. A fitting conclusion to these *G.I.* scenarios. Where better to leave our cardboard friends than in a life-and-death situation in the streets of Board 12?

Aftermath

Since you have read this far I must deduce you are not too terribly annoyed that through the course of these fifteen analyses I did indeed subject you to no small share of my "potentially oppressive" personal philosophy of *How to Play SQUAD LEADER*, despite an initial promise not to. Please accept my apology. It was unavoidable. It could have been a lot worse.

Also, a great span of time separated publication of the initial eight scenarios and these final seven. This was entirely the fault of this writer who audaciously took the liberty of deciding to change employment, sell a house and buy a house, move his family from their home to "that city" (Cleveland), and for a time ignored a large commitment made to this fine journal. Well, let's hope that never happens again.

Alas, this move entailed abandoning the Wednesday night Toledo group and that cadre of GI Heroes. But fear not. It is apparent that throughout this land there are similar gatherings to the faithful. In every city and village, every hill and dale, even in Mud Creek, Iowa, there are groups of fanatics leading squads to unknown perils and unsung destinies.

So the show continues. As we leave the ruins of that Board 12 village, two pair of eyes somehow find one another through dense smoke of a still burning Panther. For a moment it is as if they might wave or shout a greeting. But Sergeants Conner and Spoulos are not yet satisfied. Neither is convinced his war has ended. Their chance meeting has merely confirmed that one great unresolved question lingers, haunting their very existence. Some inner sense taunts them with visions, real or imagined, of future battles, future scenarios. They will meet again. In unison they silently ask themselves, "Whither next?"



AH Philosophy . . . Cont'd from Page 2

THUNDER IN THE EAST

A company that already includes the venerable *STALINGRAD* and popular *THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN* in its line has to ask itself if it really needs another World War II corps/army level game on the East Front. The answer, so far, has been a resounding "Yes!", as this game includes the best map and order of battle for any game on this scale we've seen, as well as a slick and totally different game system. The turns are monthly, combat takes place *inside* a hex, and losses are by step reduction. There is also a real feel for the air and naval aspects of the campaign, as well as for the ground game. This "hummer" is already pretty well along, and should be ready for production after a bit more playtesting and development.

THE MED

(Bear with me, these are only working titles!)

The sea and air battles in the Mediterranean during the Second World War have been largely overlooked by game publishers in the past. Yet it was a very interesting and hard-fought campaign. The whole idea is currently just being sketched out, but the potential is there for many different scenarios based on the British convoys to Malta, Italian convoys to Africa, and the evacuation of Crete. The rules will probably be based on a modified and simplified *FLATTOP* system.

Robert McNamara:

My current top-priority project is *SINA/FRONT*, a John Prados design depicting the fighting between the Egyptians and Israelis along the Suez Canal during the October War of 1973. The game consists of five scenarios on the battalion/brigade level, with step reduction, eight-hour turns, and three thousand meters per hex scale. Special emphasis is placed on command control, the recovery of tank wrecks, infantry anti-tank capability, Israeli air power, and the effectiveness of the individual commanders present during the actual conflict. *SINA/FRONT* entered the playtest stage in late May and should prove quite a challenge to both players as the mobile but outnumbered Israeli Defense Force Southern Command attempts to counter the onslaught of the powerful but less flexible Egyptian Second and Third Armies.

My second project is the long-awaited revision of the *PANZER LEADER* and *PANZERBLITZ* system. This will be accomplished by the publication of three modules, the first of which will present that classic arena of armored warfare—North Africa. This will contain all the rules for the entire revised system and four geomorphic boards, about twenty scenarios, and revised counters necessary to simulate any battalion-sized action which took place in this theater. The next module will cover the Russian Front and will contain the remaining German counters, all Russian counters, as well as new boards and scenarios. The final module will cover the Western Front and bring on the remaining Allied counters (including 1940 French) and more new boards. The scenarios of the latter two may use *PL* boards as well as well as new ones, and in all cases complete compatibility of boards and counters will be maintained.

Of envisioned changes to the game system, perhaps the most fundamental will be that which will address the present unrealistic ability of units to coordinate their fire as if all platoon commanders were telepaths. Such actions will be restricted by both nationality and year, thus adding a unique tactical "feel" to each of the national forces represented in the game system. Another major change will be the printing of separate "A" and "H" factors on each counter, which will greatly simplify odds calculations as well as giving

the units more realistic capabilities. The general aim of all rule changes will, of course, be to facilitate ease of remembering, but new concepts will also be added that, while being quite playable, should enhance the game's "flavor" by rewarding players who can apply the tactics used in reality.

The *PL/PB* revision is still very much in the idea stage (note that I've not even thought up any titles); but at least it's going to materialize—after *SINA/FRONT* is finished.

Also on my agenda is a *SQUAD LEADER* gamette tentatively titled *NORTH AFRICA: FORGING THE HAMMER* (does anyone detect a trend here?) which will add the Italians to the system as well as containing revised German and British counters. There will be seven boards (six desert and one eroded, rocky hill). The desert boards will be flat but the use of overlays for almost all terrain types will create a system whereby experienced players will be able to design virtually *any* type of desert terrain—from a large escarpment, to broken ground, to undulating sand, to "billiard table" flatness. Terrain types will include scrub, hammada, depressions, wadis, hillocks, escarpments, sand dunes, and soft sand. Rules will be limited to those dealing with movement, terrain and visibility in North Africa.

The gamette is about 90% completed, but alas, must await the finalizing of *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER* before the finishing touches can be put on it.

Thus, the newest additions to our staff have plunged in with a keen zeal. Should the readers have comments on the above, they are welcomed to contact either gentleman by mail at Avalon Hill (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214). 

Up Front . . . Cont'd from Page 23

to me. I salute a capable opponent, regretting only that we had not recorded instead one of our more exciting games which came down to the fall of a single card.

German: In conclusion, I refused to accept Don's sword. As Don has said, we've had some very close and enjoyable games. In contrast, this one is most mundane. If it serves to illustrate any precept, it might be that one must remain as flexible as possible in playing. The cards that come your way, the position on the board, the mood you're in, and innumerable other factors will influence your play. *UP FRONT* is a most unforgiving game; victory may turn on a single minor mistake that is then magnified by the luck of the draw. For that reason, and the fact that the length of play is perfectly suited to my temperament, it is undoubtedly the best wargame I've yet enjoyed in my life.

In conclusion, I look at the results of this game and I feel uneasy. Don is usually a flexible and resourceful player. In this game, however, he seemed to be locked into a particular tactic. That, in and of itself, is not bad if the cards are right; but that seemed to be the problem here. Don always got the wrong cards at the worst times. The only major mistake, I feel in retrospect, was his continued attention to German Group B (the small enemy group) from Turns 9 to 15. With a better hand, he could have afforded that diversion. With a hand like he had, every card had to count. By continued firing on Group B, he did not get the most out of his cards, and therefore did not do too well. Luck was about average here, with no particular attack being either very good, or very bad. While one could evaluate the odds of getting the cards needed, I feel that one must work with the cards one has. That is the point of the game, and the player who does this best in all circumstances will win frequently. Here Don did not, and Rex did. This was the margin of victory. 

THE CRIMEA RIVER DEFENSE

Lines of Departure in THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN

By Robert D. Harmon

THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN presents a daunting task to the defender. In a game so eminently suited to the offense, Axis air supremacy and German tactical flexibility will tax any Soviet player's mettle. The first turn of the game is a particular challenge. Soviet forces are at their weakest; the Axis forces are at peak strength. Any defensive set-up will come unravelled given enough study by the German player. The challenge of crafting a viable Russian defense was first met by Richard Jarvinen in his "Viipuri Defense" (Vol. 13, No. 6 of *The GENERAL*) and explored further in his "Barbarossa Repulsed" (Vol. 14, No. 3), "The Final Line" (Vol. 14, No. 5) and a Series Replay (Vol. 16, No. 4). The Viipuri Defense was a fine strategy, and much ingenuity was spent defeating it. The subsequent appearance of a *Viipuri II* defense simply went to show that: 1) any defensive set-up, no matter how well-crafted, can be punctured; 2) players must continually review and revise their own tactics, especially in a game such as *TRC*.

Any analysis of a *TRC* defense must begin with the following truisms:

1. The Axis will overwhelm any Soviet defense. A Russian defense will be successful only if it keeps enemy gains (in units and turf) to a minimum.
2. The Axis can win by a massive gain of Soviet land *or* by massive Soviet losses. Given the former, the Germans can focus their power on, say Moscow, unless they're kept away. Given the latter, the Russian winter (revenge) offensive will falter.

The Russians, then, should deploy to keep the Germans from advancing too far (four hexes from the border) on the first game turn. The Russian player should also try to keep a few of his pre-war units alive till winter; at least 25% including replacements, I figure. The September-to-December reinforcements won't suffice.

An important note on the rules. Two key rules apply to Soviet defensive plans. The first, Rule 8.3, means that any units in a zone of control (ZOC) at the end of the first impulse are stuck there. Secondly, Rule 16.2 means that units participating in an automatic victory (AV) cannot attack in the second impulse.

With all this in mind, let's examine the five Soviet defensive districts.

KARELIA: At The Gates

The situation here is relatively simple, with 13 Finnish factors facing nine Soviet (the Leningrad tank corps is needed elsewhere). The theater is three hexes wide, from hex A9 to the Gulf of Finland. The critical aspect of this theater is Leningrad itself, only two hexes from the border.

The two Soviet units—the 7th and the 23rd Armies—should set up on hexes B9 and C10. Hex C10, if held, puts a river between Leningrad and the Finns. A unit at C10 will block any eastward drive, and prevent Finnish deployment east of A10; the front is narrowed to two hexes.

The Finns can manage no more than a 2-1 assault against Soviet four- or five-factor defenders. The Finns can only replace one corps per year, so a single Finnish loss in a 2-1 or less will stabilize the front. Two Soviet armies should suffice to contain the Finns, unless the Germans ship in a panzer corps or (shudder) a headquarters unit. The Finns can try to separate the two armies by attacking one at C10 and soaking off against the other, leaving Finnish units on hex B10. This will, if successful, keep the Soviets at B9 from covering Leningrad. This will also require a Finnish second-impulse attack on B9 from across a river. That's why a 5-4 army (the 23rd) on B9 will discourage the Finns from trying that, especially as the Finns get no second-impulse movement.

One problem both sides should consider: once the Germans are across the Dvina, a HQ unit can

lend air support to a Finnish attack on Leningrad. The Finns should not be allowed into the C or D row hexes of the Karelian Isthmus for this reason.

BALTIC MILITARY DISTRICT: Bottleneck

The Baltic Military District (BMD) is fortunate in that it has a narrow front to hold, initially. A four-hex frontage allows a four-unit row of interlocking ZOCs or two two-unit lines. The BMD front is narrow at the Polish border, and narrows in back (from hex F18 to I19) if the Courland peninsula is ignored; and it should be. The opposing force, Army Group North (AGN), is weak (that's highly relative). But, the AGN has its own air support and can funnel 29 factors into two hexes.

Soviet forces in the BMD, then, should not stack (a convenient aerial target), nor should they rely on the Western Military District to hold the flank. Neighboring district units can be soaked-off or destroyed by Army Group Centre. The BMD does have reserves available in Leningrad and Riga—two tank corps and one army. But the defense of the Dvina is their major duty.

BMD defensive set-ups, as with the other districts, will be discussed further later in this piece. For now, remember that the BMD, narrow as it is, guards the shortest route from the Reich to the Dvina, to Riga, and to Leningrad. The BMD, then, is a bottleneck, but one with a sputtering fuse and a strong smell of petrol.

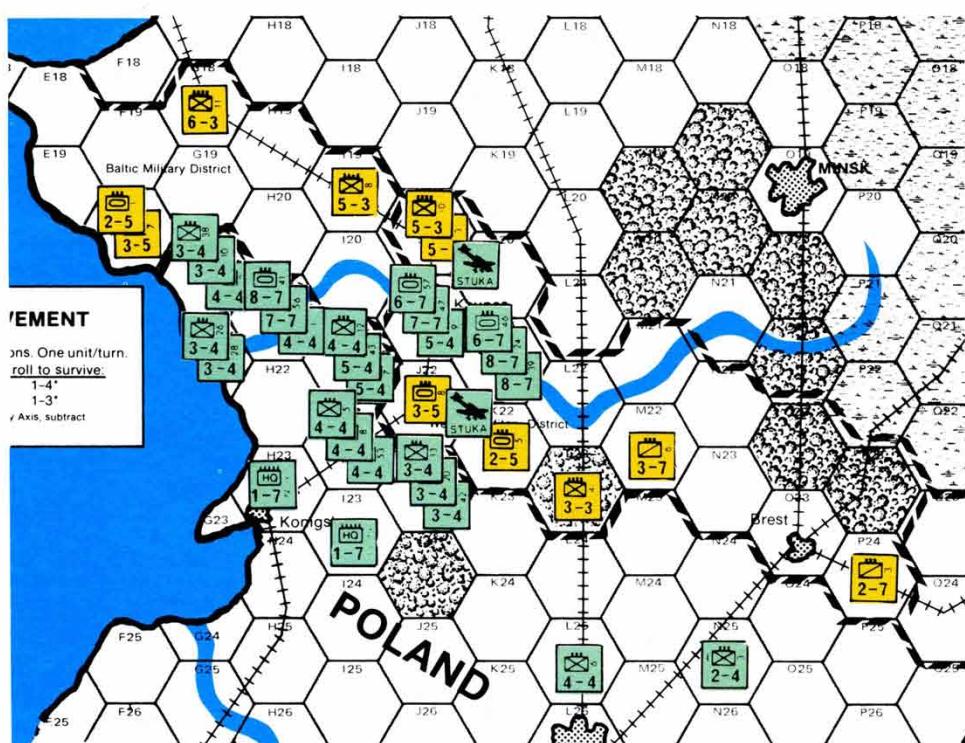
WESTERN MILITARY DISTRICT: Harm's Way

The Western Military District (WMD) is, by contrast, wide; and its units are weak in quality and quantity. The opposing Army Group Centre (AGC) has 82 combat factors, 35 of them armored, plus at least one airstrike. The WMD itself is wide, with no real cover to protect what forces can be mustered.

The Russian player can assume that the WMD will be, ah . . . terminated, redeployed, fully amortized, or whatever effete term the Pentagon is using for disaster this week. The Russian can expect that the WMD, despite his best efforts, will be completely depopulated. The objective for him here then: avoid penetration.

Automatic victories are his key problem. Army Group Centre (AGC) can spare a unit for AVs and still have a formidable second-impulse attack, not to mention an offensive right through the first-impulse AVs. A 10-1 AV is perhaps wasteful, tying up 20-50 combat factors per AV'd Soviet unit, but a 7-1 AV (with artillery support) is likely. The Soviet player should plan for German AVs. A double line won't suffice. An AV on the front line will allow an attack on the second line, same impulse, with an open road eastward on the *next* impulse. (This was described in detail in Jarvinen's "Back to the Viipuri".)

Interlocking ZOCs will help prevent this, by casting a web of ZOCs in front of such a drive. (Units can't move on the second impulse if they start in the ZOC of neighboring, unsubdued, enemy units.) Such a defense should not be pushed to its extreme, however. Diagram 2 shows what a massed



German attack can do to a linear defense. A single battle can cover any number of connected hexes as long as Rule 12.5 is satisfied. A combination of dual-line and interlock-front defense might work, or at least serve as a moderate solution. The set-up discussions that follow later will pursue this.

Hex J22 is the key to control of this district; in fact, it is the single most critical hex in the game (other games have such key hexes—Mt. Vesuvius in *ANZIO* is one example). Any German penetration will start with an attack into or through J22. Here is where any set-up will be sorely tested. Hex J22 and Kaunas lead directly to the interior of *Matushka Rossiva*.

A final note on WMD forces: the Minsk garrison provides a small backup for your mistakes. The tank corps can help cover the upper Dnepr; the 13th Army is best advised to take the railroad. The 13th cannot stop AGC all by itself if the forces in the WMD couldn't; it can help hold the Dvina or Smolensk.

The WMD will die. Figure on it. The German player will try to penetrate through and get a head start on Moscow. Modern warfare, after all, is a matter of penetration, exploitation, and pursuit. Any wearer of the West Point ring can tell you that. Or any wargamer. The WMD must deploy, not to survive the opening battles, but to slow the German advance. If the Germans don't get out of the WMD on the first turn, the Soviets will have done well.

KIEV MILITARY DISTRICT: In the Nutcracker

The Kiev Military District (KMD) is a geographical paradox. It has lavish terrain features, but is subject to attack from three directions. Worse, a drive from the south could pocket the entire district's defenders. The three approaches are, of course, from southern Poland, from eastern Hungary, and from northern Rumania. The Hungarian approach is a minor distraction because of the difficult terrain. The remaining two avenues of advance threaten two different areas, so must be discussed separately now.

The first threat is to the Lwow sector. (That's pronounced *Lvov* and if you find it too difficult to say, the German will be happy to call it Lemberg.) Lwow can be taken in a two-impulse drive from Poland. The Russians can count themselves fortunate if they occupy the Lwow hills before the enemy. The Lwow hills provide a formidable obstacle. Wedged in the bottleneck between the Pripet Marshes and the Carpathian Mountains, these hills make a useful stopper—if Army Group South (AGS) comes from Poland.

If the Lwow sectors is bypassed, if AGS chooses to drive from Rumania instead, the Germans might still want to take Lwow. The enemy can pocket the KMD from the south, but Lwow would still supply the KMD—leaving a Soviet army in the German rear as a force in being. So Lwow must be defended in either case.

The other avenue through the KMD, upper Moldavia, is the most critical theater here. This area (around hex W25) allows German access to the marsh (pocketing KMD) and to Kiev itself. The city could be at risk as soon as July if the Soviets aren't careful.

The south end of the KMD provides crucial defense assets. The hexes V26 and V27, along with hex Y25 (in the Odessa District), can cramp Axis set-ups in the mountains. If the AGS commander expects to march into the flats through southern KMD, AGS forces must set-up in hexes W26, X26, X27 and

Z27. Soviet ZOCs can reach into Rumania and tie up many such hexes. Rule 3.4 states that the Axis cannot set-up adjacent to Soviet units. This means setting up in the Carpathians, in Rumanian hexes north of row BB. Axis mobility in the mountains could be a problem. Given Soviet deployment as above, the exposed hex W25 might not need to be occupied.

The Kiev garrison provides the KMD reserve. Both units can march directly into action, as the next line of defense is apt to be near the Bug. The Germans should be kept away from the city as long as possible; a large garrison in the city won't hold, though, if the Stukas are a threat.

ODESSA MILITARY DISTRICT: Underbelly

The prime mission of the Odessa Military District (OMD) is flank defense for the KMD. Since, under the rules, AGS can only hit the KMD initially, the Axis forces in Rumania (let's call it AGR) must reduce the OMD. The AGR is weak, so OMD should be able to fulfill its mission untroubled.

The OMD continues the KMD defense of upper Moldavia. An AGS attack is apt to go through the inter-district hinge and straight at Kiev. OMD set-ups, then, should orient on the KMD. OMD set-up in hexes Y25 and AA25, combined with the KMD hexes V26 and V27, restrict the Axis placement to the Canube plain or the deep Carpathians. Except for mountain corps, the Axis will find movement *out of* there a problem, if AGS forces must be set-up two hexes deep.

To sum up: The OMD/KMD deployment facing Rumania should deny the enemy his key set-up hexes there.

The Soviet player should remember OMD's vulnerability to AVs. AGR's 23 factors can AV either three-factor OMD unit, with aid from AGS air power. Such an AV would tie up the AGR for two impulses, but would remove a third of the forces facing them. AGS could then march through the resulting hole. An AGR AV at AA25, for instance, could allow AGS to enter the Ukraine without attacking the OMD. The Soviet 9th Army, five factors, is all that could challenge this move.

The final OMD placement, then, should follow a form of the *Odessa Triangle* (see accompanying box). This provides a two-line defense which,

though weak to the south, at least deflects a drive on the KMD and Kiev. The OMD reserve, the 2nd Cavalry Corps in Odessa, provides an extended line. Since AGR can only attack OMD units, the city garrison can secure the coastal flank. For one impulse, anyway.

DISTRICT INTERLOCK

We've seen, in examining the Kiev and Odessa Military Districts, how two districts can relate. The boundary between the KMD and the OMD is critical to the Ukraine in general, and Kiev in particular. A breach of the lower Dnestr, or the Lwow sector, wouldn't be quite as deadly.

Another, less obvious link, is that between the KMD and the WMD. Units in Brest and Q24, you might say, could close this. The Axis player might not be interested in a dead end leading to the Pripyet Marsh. However, the Brest sector does provide avenues to the south, rather than eastward. Penetration of Q24 allows AGS to flank, possibly surround, the Lwow sector.

The Kaunas Gap, bordered by WMD and BMD, is indeed critical—especially for the WMD. Hex I21 is apt to be the left shoulder of a German breakthrough. The Russian set-up should provide for interlocking ZOCs, with units on I20 and J22. Another unit in Kaunas, with only I21 for its cover initially, is also a fine idea. Kaunas, unless stoutly attacked, could hold out till the second impulse. Hex I21 serves two German purposes if captured. The hex provides AGC with access to the WMD. AGN also needs I21 to widen its narrow front. A Soviet unit in Kaunas could very well tie up both AGN and AGC units if Kaunas gets off with merely a soakoff attack. The I20-I21-J22 line, then, should be held by three units. This would cover the district hinge and possibly divert enemy troops from other ventures.

RESERVES

Behind the Military Districts stand the reserve forces ("Group C"). Some units are close enough to the fighting front to face second-impulse attack—as at Minsk, Riga and Odessa. All reserves, certainly, can help repair the Soviet line during the Russian May/June 1941 turn.

The BMD reserves, in Leningrad and Riga, can take up positions on the Dvina. The WMD reserve

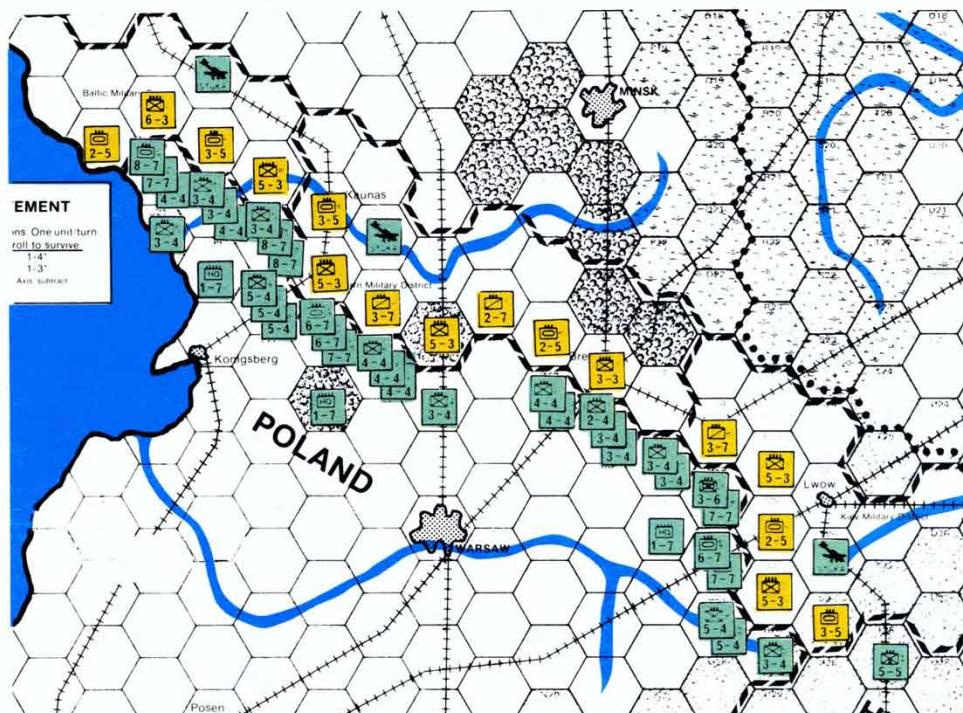


Diagram 2 Breaking the Linear Defense

The Linear Defense poses interlocking ZOCs that will entangle piecemeal attacks. The solution is to remove the whole Russian line. The attack on the Lwow sector would do as well in upper Moldavia, though it would kill fewer KMD units. All mass attacks are aided by the Stukas displayed.

in Minsk can try to hold the city, or the flats between Kaunas and Vitebsk or, better yet, fall back on the Dvina. The Minsk reserves are best used behind the upper Dnepr. The 6th Tank Corps can fall back on the river bend in a two-impulse march its Moscow counterpart, the 2nd Tank Corps, can meet it there. All this so far without rail movement.

Railroads will be needed for remaining reserves in Riga and Moscow. Of the former, the 27th Army is best used in the Dvina Line, where it will be badly needed by July 1941.

The Kiev garrison, as noted, is best used before the city, not in it. Once the Germans get there, the Stukas will defeat any stack defending in the city itself. The Odessa garrison, due to its location, is already a part of the OMD line. Its uses are similar to that of the Kiev cavalry, if either survive the first turn. The cavalry units can get to any point in the Ukraine without railroad movement.

The strategic reserve is, certainly, the tank corps and three armies in the Moscow region. The armies will require three of the five RR moves to deploy. Events will dictate where they, and the replacements, go. The Moscow-based 2nd Tank Corps can roll directly to the upper Dnepr bend. It can also fill the critical gap at N14. The bend of the Dnepr at Smolensk, P15 and Q15, lacking rails, won't allow immediate deployment of infantry. The riverbend must, therefore, be filled with the Moscow and Minsk tank corps, and any replacement armor (or cavalry) from the capitol.

Now that we've established some basic considerations, we can look at five set-ups (presented in Chart 1), and discuss each. These are not "perfect" plans; in fact, I make object lessons of several. The set-ups are all meant to illustrate *TRC* tactics and pose ideas only.

DEFENSE A: Linear

The Linear Defense is admittedly an extreme. I show it here to demonstrate the advantages, and pitfalls, of such a strategy. The linear strategy has one manifest advantage—its interlocking ZOCs. German units seeking to penetrate the line would (in theory) become entangled in a snare of them. Units in a ZOC at the end of the first impulse would, of course, stay put on the second impulse. This would freeze the shoulders of a penetrating force.

Attrition is the German answer to linear defenses. The German player can resort to mass attacks against multi-hex defenses when AVs and advances become difficult. (Diagram 2 dramatizes this.) In the BMD this tactic becomes simple. AGN's 35 factors line up against BMD's 16, declare one mass 2-1, and throw in a Stuka. The BMD has a 50-50 chance of surviving the first impulse, but will be retreated out of the AGN's path in neat stacks. The road to Riga is open.

The same is true in the WMD. The entire Soviet line from Kaunas to L23 can be hit. Given 15 WMD factors in these hexes, 60 AGC factors and a Stuka produce 7-1! Even the usual AGN/AGC jam-up at I21 would be no problem, as one AGC unit will suffice to include Kaunas in the overall battle. Hex I21 would still be free for two AGN units. With this sort of attack, AGC would still have enough material for an attack on Brest and N23 from two hexes. This would be an effective, if gratuitous, addition to the slaughter.

Would a mass retreat dislocate the German attrition strategy? It would be the worst luck for the attacker. Yet even this can be turned into an Axis advantage. A mass retreat of the WMD (the Kaunas-L23 line) would be ruinous to Soviet fortunes. The German player, being the attacker, decides enemy retreat routes. Retreating units could wind up in stacks at, say, L22 and M21. This would leave WMD open to pocketing and mop-up. This would also leave White Russia open to the German troops.

The entire Russian line before Lwow could suf-

fer a similar fate. AGS, with air support, could hit the whole Q24-to-S27 front (as in the illustration) with 47 AGS factors to 21 KMD, or 5-1 odds. An exchange, the worst result, would cost the Germans one 3-4 corps, and the Russians would be out of the way. The Lwow hills would fall, while Soviet survivors would be sidetracked to the marsh and Carpathians. The Rumanian frontier would unravel from the north, without the usual direct assault.

The German means of penetrating the Linear Defense must be attrition (i.e., mass slaughter). This is still only the means however. The German objective, as always, would be penetration into the Russian interior.

DEFENSE B: Defense-in-Depth

This defense has an obvious aim. The Germans are to spend their two impulses penetrating the two lines, with possible AVs in the least damaging areas. The first line is stronger, mainly to make any AVs costly by tying up German forces that could otherwise participate in the second impulse. Or so the Russian player hopes.

The AV sites are apparent. The Soviet 3rd and 10th Armies would each take 35 AGC factors to AV, plus an airstrike, and a second Russian defense line stands behind them. An AV of the 10th Army and the 3rd Cavalry Corps, in another example, would allow an attack on the second impulse, and the penetration of Byelorussia would be narrow. Further, the diversion of AGN/AGC air units would spare the BMD. Hex R27 is another possible AV spot. The 26th Army could be AV'd, but this would commit 35 AGS factors, leaving only 12 factors to attack Lwow. These AVs may not be worthwhile.

AVs can indeed be made, but at a price to the Germans. The required massed ground and air power would tie up many German units and allow

other sectors to escape with minimal damage. The Russians would surely lose ground, and couldn't prevent a major breakthrough. But they would save many units in the long run. This could win—or lose—the Soviet player the game, depending on how carefully the tradeoff (units vs. space) was made.

On the other hand, the German when faced with a defense-in-depth can select his AV with great care and rupture a key position. Diagram 3 shows how the game could be lost. The German player has limited his AVs to a single, very well-chosen one. That's a good example of economy of force.

DEFENSE C: Collapsible

This defense attempts a compromise between the linear and the defense-in-depth strategies. Its chief difference to the latter is its weak front line and strong second, rather than the opposite as described above. Linear strategies can suffer massive attrition; defense-in-depth can fall victim to penetration (as the Viipuri experience showed). The Collapsible Defense sought a happy medium.

The Odessa Triangle returns, and the effectiveness of the new southern KMD line should be obvious. The northern KMD forces have been left with an economy-of-force mission. A frontal AGS attack would destroy them and take Lwow, but would keep KMD survivors between the enemy and Kiev.

The WMD flank cover at P24 is a KMD weak point. Its AV (by AGC) will allow AGS to take out the whole Lwow defense on the first impulse. The Germans will take the Lwow hills by the end of June 1941, but could still pay a heavy price. Large AGC forces will have to be diverted. The WMD defense abandons the southern end of the district, except for the P24 units, which is more diversionary than defensive and more KMD than WMD in position.

CHART 1: ALTERNATIVE DEPLOYMENTS: TRC

DISTRICT/UNIT	LINEAR	DEF IN DEPTH	COLLAP- SIBLE	HYBRID	CRIMEA RIVER
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BALTIC MILITARY DISTRICT:

8th Army	I20	I20	I19	I19	H20
11th Army	G19	G19	G18	G18	G19
1st Tank Corps	F20	F19	F20	F20	G18
7th Tank Corps	H20	H19	H20	I20	H19

WESTERN MILITARY DISTRICT:

3rd Army	L23	J22	J20	L23	L22
4th Army	Brest	Brest	L23	Brest	K22
10th Army	J22	L23	K20	J22	J22
5th Tank Corps	N23	K20	K22	J20	J20
8th Tank Corps	Kaunas	K20	J22	K21	K20
3rd Cavalry Corps	M22	M21	P24	K20	K21
6th Cavalry Corps	K22	J20	M22	L22	Kaunas

KIEV MILITARY DISTRICT:

5th Army	V26	Lwow	Lwow	R25	Lwow
6th Army	R25	W25	S24	V26	W25
12th Army	W25	W24	W24	W24	W24
26th Army	R27	R27	V25	R27	V26
3rd Tank Corps	U26	R24	V26	U26	R25
4th Tank Corps	R26	T27	S27	S27	T27
11th Tank Corps	S27	V26	V27	Q24	V25
5th Cavalry Corps	Q24	Q24	R26	W25	R26

ODESSA MILITARY DISTRICT:

9th Army	AA25	AA25	AA25	AA25	AA25
12th Tank Corps	X25	Z24	Z24	X24	Z25
4th Cavalry Corps	Z25	Y25	Y25	Y25	X25

KARELIA (FINNISH BORDER):

7th Army	C10 (all cases)
23rd Army	B9 (all cases)

The rest of the Brest sector is wide open. The Germans can advance into the marsh and forest as far as Minsk. This is preferable to a penetration north. The main WMD defense is in depth. The front line features interlocking ZOC, requiring total elimination for a German advance. The Germans could AV the first line, but would tie up much of AGC (77 factors in this illustration), leaving only five factors to hit the second line.

The second WMD line has three advantages. It fills the gap between the forest and the BMD. It utilizes part of the Neman River. Best of all, it matches the two strongest WMD units against the second (weakest) impulse. A second WMD line has one further plus. It provides a strong flank cover for the BMD second echelon.

Now that the Collapsible Defense has been shown to be so effective, let's puncture it. Diagram 1 makes an object lesson of this set-up, using the WMD sector. Hex J22 is the weak link in the Collapsible. Its AV results in the destruction of the second line after the breaking of the front. The AV will tie up most of AGC, but the Germans will get well into Russia during the second impulse. The BMD set-up is strictly to keep the Germans off the Dvina. The AGN will have no problem eliminating BMD over two impulses, but at least they will be kept within the district. An AV on the front two units is possible in a 7-1 battle (with airstrike), but would require all 35 AGN factors; net gain would be minimal. In short, this set-up doesn't prevent loss of Soviet land or Soviet units. Losses in the WMD will be particularly heavy.

Most important, this object lesson serves to show that some AVs can be more disastrous than others.

DEFENSE D: Hybrid

This defense started as a variant of the Collapsible, but showed some innovations all its own.

The BMD remains the same as in the Collapsible, except for the 7th Tank Corps—relocated from H20 to I20. This simple change puts the 7th squarely in the path of both AGN and AGC, blocking access to the WMD right flank. The 7th Tank Corps, in this instance, proves just how critical individual hexes and single units can be in the all-important Kaunas sector.

The next reform is in the WMD. A triple line is formed, which allows for first-impulse AVs from J22 or L23. The 8th Tank Corps, if in Kaunas, would not by necessity require a soakoff; the Germans could very well AV it together with the 10th Army. Instead, the 8th sits *behind* the 10th at K21, awaiting its turn. A second AV would be needed by the German, and tie up another 30 combat factors and another air unit.

The WMD and the KMD no longer support each other. The Lwow sector, rather, performs an economy-of-force mission. If AGS wants to make a frontal attack there, it is worth the loss of those KMD units to let AGS go the long way around. The southern KMD is held more strongly, as the real innovation is found in OMD.

The Odessa Triangle is discarded; the rear corps is at X24 rather than Z24. This mitigates an AV on Y25, and helps defend the all-important hex W24. Deviation from the Odessa Triangle means trouble, however. An AGR attack on AA25, though not an AV if the Russian 9th Army is there, will still allow AGS to pour through on the second impulse. They can, from CC25, cross the Bug or hit Odessa.

This defense trades lower for upper Moldavia. AGR can still AV the 4th Cavalry at Y25, but will cramp set-up hexes X27 and Y27. This puts AGR in

CHART 2: THE OPPONING FORCES

SOVIET DISTRICT	FACTORS	ENEMY FORCE	ENEMY FACTORS: INF/PZ/HQ/TOTAL		
Finnish Border	9	Finns	11	0	0 0
Baltic Military District	16	AGN	20	15	1 35
BMB Reserve:					
Leningrad	3				
Riga	7				
Western Military District	23	AGC	46	35	1 81
WMD Reserve:					
Minsk	6				
Kiev Military District	31	AGS	24	23	1 47
KMD Reserve:					
Kiev	6				
Odessa Military District	11	AGR	23	0	0 23
OMD Reserve:					
Odessa	3				
CENTRAL RESERVE:					
Moscow	25	—	—	—	—
(includes cities of Moscow, Kalinin, Tula)					

NOTES:

1. "Inf" forces include all mobile units other than Pz/PzG units, including Axis armored and mechanized units.
2. "Pz" forces include German Panzer and Panzergrenadier units.
3. "Total" is less HQ units.
4. Soviet "reserve" units do not include HQ or worker units.

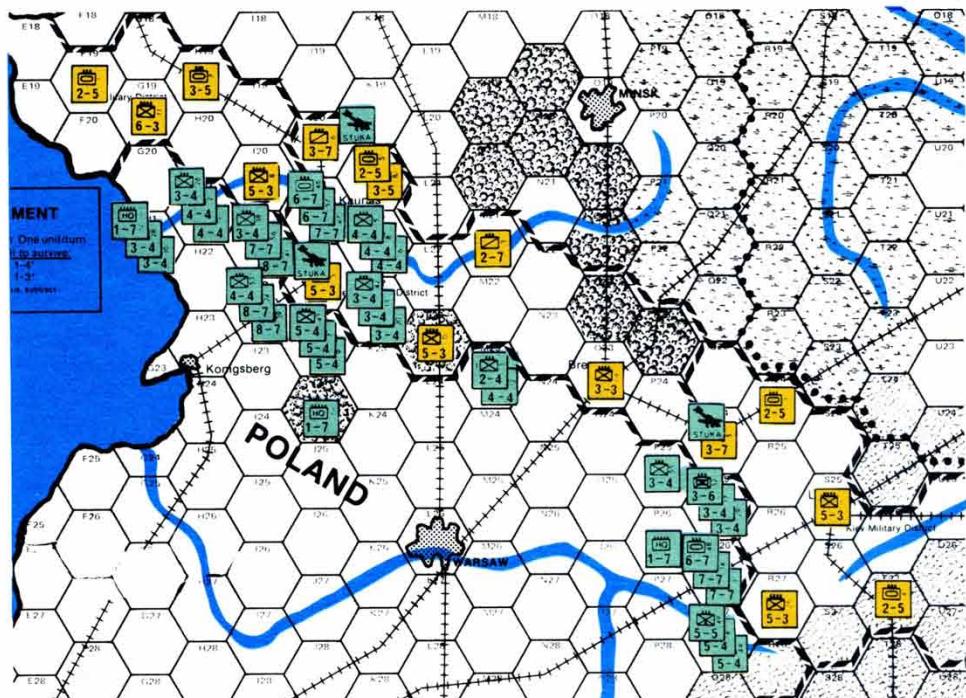


Diagram 3 Puncturing the Defense-in-Depth

This defense, which features a strong first line (as opposed to the Collapsible's strong second line) still faces a real AV threat. Here the Germans tie up 35 factors of their best units in a Kaunas sector AV, but reap rich rewards. Stukas help smash the 3rd Army and 5th Cavalry Corps.

THE ODESSA TRIANGLE

A Re-Appearance

The original "Viipuri Defense" derided the so-called *Odessa Triangle* (reprinted below). Mr. Jarvinen posed a German Automatic Victory, penetrating this defense with two airstrikes. Since that time, the ploy has gone undiscussed. No more.

The key problem, which I stress repeatedly throughout this article, are the Axis set-up hexes. The AGR attack on the 4th Cavalry needs 21 ground factors (six units) for an AV. This takes in the Rumanian mountain corps, which doesn't need a front-line set-up hex. The AV done, the German 49th Mountain Corps (placed behind the Carpathians) and the 52nd Panzergrenadier Corps (placed with AGR) can make a 4-1 on the Soviet 12th Army. Both attacks require Stukas, naturally.

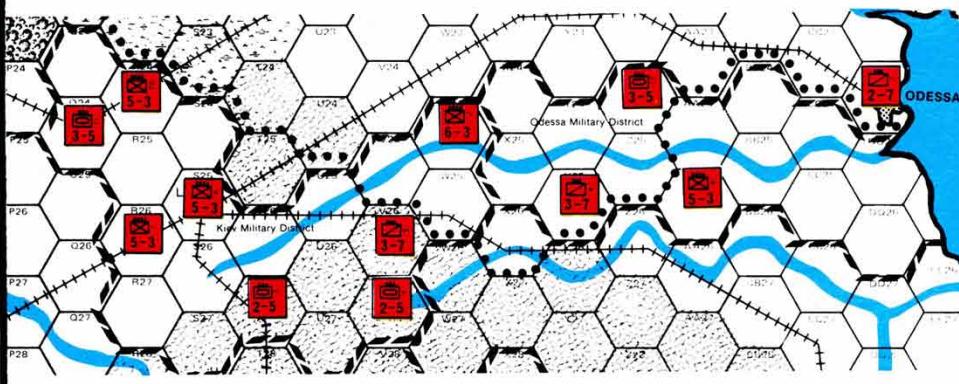
Mind you, the attack can go in. Jarvinen makes brilliant use of the mountain troops' special mobility. Still, the attack has problems. These should be addressed from the German standpoint.

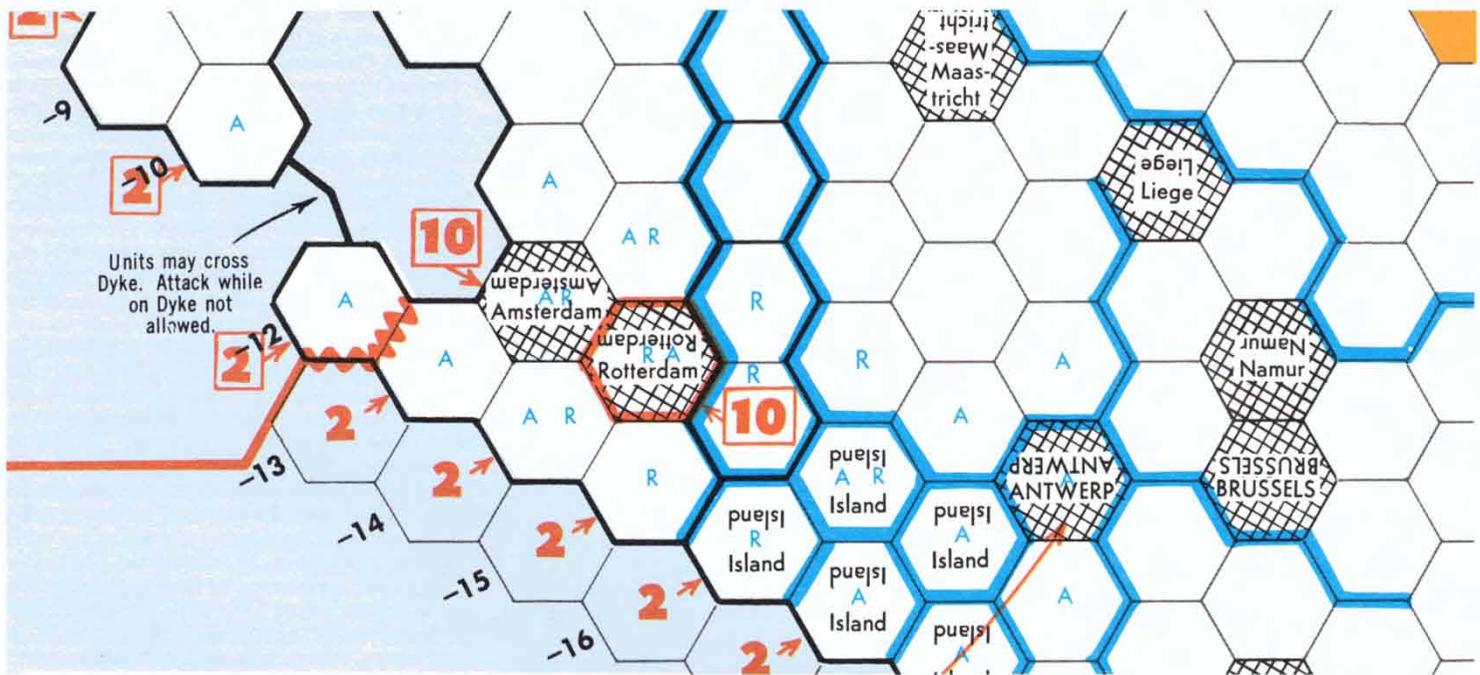
First, this assault ties up two airstrike's for the AGR's sake. These two airstrikes (two out of three for the entire Eastern Front) will detract from the rest of the war effort. The three main army groups will find penetration to be really tough without Stukas. AGS wouldn't even benefit here, as not much room is left for them to deploy in the Carpathians. There's little room left after the AGR, the 49th and the 52nd are all placed.

The second major problem is the main battle itself. The 4-1 has a 1/3 chance of a "bad" result. The Germans, if they get a *Contact*, would be left with a mandatory, second impulse 1-1 attack with little or no help from AGR. The AGR, of course, can't attack on the impulse after they AV a unit. Or, if the 4-1 battle results in an *Exchange*, the 52nd Panzergrenadiers would be left alone to hold hex W22. The pocketed KMD units may very well withdraw right over the 52nd.

The Jarvinen attack has a third hassle involved. The presence of a Russian unit at W25 will stop the whole project. This will allow a AGS/AGR attack on the inter-district hinge, as mentioned in the main article. But the attack would be frontal, not necessarily a penetration. And the Jarvinen attack on the Triangle, already on a shoestring, would change beyond recognition.

The Jarvinen assault is clever; no denying that! And, it is a good way to crack the Odessa Triangle. But it lavishes too much Axis power on, essentially, a raid. The Odessa Triangle, then, is still a useful Soviet strategy, if bolstered by a strong KMD south flank. If the Axis player must lavish this much effort on breaking the Triangle, then it is quite worthwhile.





BLOOD ON THE BEACHES

D—DAY, The Allied Invasion

By James M. Lutz

The 1977 version of *D-DAY* is a game that is both playable and historical. The options open to the Allied player with regard to the selection of invasion areas recapture some of the critical decisions of 1944. The seven invasion areas, while hardly similar in many respects, all provide a situation in which, if the Allied player does get ashore in a successful first invasion, chances of victory are clearly present—almost irrespective of where the initial landing is made. On the whole, the chances of a successful first invasion are quite good. Thus, Hitler's historic gamble on a weak (in the overall sense) defense of Western Europe is reproduced with considerable accuracy.

While the various invasion areas will be discussed each in turn, it is immediately obvious that the Allied player first must respond to the German initial placement (already quite well discussed by Robert Beyma, "Fortress Europe Revisited," *GENERAL*, Vol. 15, No. 5). Any given area or a number of areas can be made virtually impregnable against the first invasion, either by the defences on the beaches or the placement of reserves. Any discussion of various invasion areas cannot possibly pinpoint which one should be chosen in all cases. To a certain extent, the German player will limit the options of the Allied player. Instead, the following discussion is intended to highlight what can be accomplished from successful invasions in various areas, as well as the potential disabilities. It is intended as a brief introduction to novice players of some of the considerations the Allied player must take into account in making his decision. To them, I would stress that they always remember: a successful invasion is likely since, while the German player can deny some areas, he cannot make all seven impregnable. There is the essence of your strategic game.

Some comments will be included on second invasion at various points, but the advantages of different areas are more dependent on the tactical situation in any given game for the follow-up invasion. The Allied player may opt for seeking a major tactical victory (cutting off large elements of the

German army) or be governed by more strategic considerations. The Allied decision may even be governed by the present play balance. A high-risk second invasion may be the only chance to reverse a very unfavorable situation. In any event, *D-DAY* '77 permits the Allied player to at least have one last chance of swinging the situation in his favor (or losing the game quickly as the case may be).

The first invasion area to consider is the North Sea, one which may provide a tempting target. It has a number of obvious advantages (although they may be more apparent than real). First, it is close to both Germany and the Rhine. Second, this invasion area also has adequate buildup of forces on the turns following the invasion. Third, if the Allies gain control of the Dike, movement into Germany is relatively easy and difficult to stop early in the game, leading to a potential quick Allied victory. Fourth, Rotterdam, Amsterdam and nearby Antwerp can serve as major supply ports. Finally, Rotterdam contains a key installation that can contribute to early Allied replacements. There are significant disadvantages, however, to any North Sea invasion. The invasion beaches, except for the one hex adjacent to Ostend, have supply factors of only "2", thus hindering the buildup of the invasion force and limiting exploitation off the beaches. As a result, while the buildup capacity for the North Sea area is adequate, there is limited supply for units ashore. An invasion force can be bottled up and forced off the beaches unless either Amsterdam or Rotterdam is captured quickly and the controlling hexes for either of these ports cleared and kept cleared, an extremely difficult task given the limited number of units that can be supplied. On the whole, the chances of a successful first North Sea landing are not good against any kind of competent defense. A second invasion of the area faces the same problems, although to a lesser degree if the first invasion was successful. Perhaps the only circumstances in which a second invasion is likely to succeed in this area is if the German army has already been badly hurt in terms of casualties, par-

ticularly among mobile units, or if the German has been obliging enough to leave only static divisions for garrison duty and his mobile forces are committed in the west. The lack of attack capabilities of the static units might permit the Allied player to take both Amsterdam and Rotterdam, clear the surrounding hexes for at least one of these cities, and funnel troops across the Dike into Germany.

The Pas de Calais area provides some of the same advantages as the North Sea for the Allied player. There is a good buildup capability after the assembly of an excellent invasion force. A key installation is present in Boulogne. The area is close to Germany and the vital supply port of Antwerp. Unlike the North Sea, the potential supply hexes, either beach or town, have fairly large capacities (five or seven), permitting effective exploitation from the beaches. The Pas de Calais presents a number of handicaps. Given its clear advantages, it will probably be at least adequately defended, leading to potentially heavy Allied casualties. It is also centrally located, and thus reachable by significant German mobile formations whatever their initial placement. Another critical factor is that the fortresses of Dunkirk, Calais, and Boulogne and the Somme River effectively cut the area into a number of discrete sections, thus hindering the consolidation of a beachhead (mutual support will be difficult). If the fortresses are garrisoned and the Allied player does not get a good die roll on the initial invasion try, he may find his forces split into two groups, one at Dieppe and one at Ostend. Such forces would be subject to defeat in detail. As a result, a first invasion can be potentially both costly and subject to a high chance of failure. A second invasion in the area will, of course, depend on results elsewhere, although a German defense with only static divisions would again ease many of the difficulties of a successful landing and exploitation.

Little need be said about the Le Havre invasion area. There are only three landing hexes, the key points are easily defended, and the invasion force can be easily bottled up—and even pushed back into the sea. The invasion hexes have good supply fac-

tors and the buildup capability is high, but for the area to be useful, Le Havre itself would have to be quickly captured (probably with a gamble on a low odds attack). Even if the Allied player cares to gamble, there are usually better gambles to take elsewhere. A second invasion here might be useful in conjunction with a push from the Normandy region or the Bay of Biscay if no other opportunities are available. But this depends, needless-to-say, on circumstances in the developing game.

The historic Normandy beaches have some distinct advantages that might make them a worthwhile first invasion target. The beach hexes have good supply capacity; if Cherbourg can be isolated and captured, supply problems are solved. Reinforcements appear quickly in subsequent turns. If a breakout can be achieved, then the Brittany peninsula will fall quickly and the key installation at Brest can be taken. The Normandy invasion has one clear major disadvantage however. It is extremely difficult to break out of the bottleneck formed at the base of the peninsula by St. Lo, Bayeaux, Avranches, and Vire River. These points are likely to be strongly garrisoned, forcing the landings to occur towards Cherbourg. Attempts to breakout through this bottleneck, barring a Hitleristic decision to maintain a concentration of mobile reserves in the Pas de Calais area, will be costly and any ground gained difficult to hold in the face of German counterattacks. Even carpet bombing will not guarantee quick exploitation. If more than one carpet bombing attack has to be used, the German has gained a useful tactical victory in that they will not be available later. The success at Normandy may well depend upon whether the German player will still be able to adequately guard most of the other invasion areas, at least those east of Normandy.

Brittany has many of the same advantages and disadvantages as Normandy, albeit to different degrees. Supply capacity of the beaches is somewhat worse than Normandy, necessitating the quick capture of Lorient, St. Malo, or Brest. Both the initial invasion force and reinforcement capabilities are smaller than Normandy, but normally would be adequate unless German reserves are concentrated in the immediate area initially (an unlikely event). The key installation of Brest is in the area, permitting the early gain of at least some Allied replacement capability. Brittany has many of the same disadvantages as Normandy. It is even further from the Rhine. The invasion force can be bottled up at the base of the peninsula, particularly at the Avranches-Rennes-St. Nazaire line. Unlike Normandy, however, the attempt to break out, while possibly costly to the Allied player, will also take a toll of German units, even if the breakout attempt is unsuccessful. As a result, it might be possible to fatally weaken the Germans in the first ten or twelve weeks in a battle of attrition, easing the second invasion and the ultimate crossing of the Rhine. Compared to Normandy, larger German forces are necessary to contain the invasion, and these forces are far removed from most of the potential invasion areas. Thus, there may be definite advantages for the Allies in failing to break out quickly. Only a second invasion will tell.

The Bay of Biscay would appear to have few advantages for the Allied player as a first invasion site. Invasion forces available are limited, and the initial buildup capability is small. The number of invasion hexes is limited as well. Bordeaux, one of the key supply ports, has a large number of control hexes that can negate its advantages. If the area is more than minimally defended, victory depends on quickly gaining control of La Rochelle and Bordeaux for supply purposes. Still, the area does have a number of positive assets from the Allied point of view, particularly if it is undefended. Once ashore, the Allied player faces few strong defensive positions. The plains of southeastern France favor the offensive rather than the defensive. If the Ger-

mans can be stretched out defending the Loire from Vichy to Nantes, the chances of a successful Allied breakthrough may be good. Such a breakthrough might even permit the isolation of significant German forces in the West, a cheap (but effective) means of weakening the ultimate defense of the Rhine. If the Germans are forced to defend the Loire, the second invasion is also likely to have a greater chance of success. Another advantage of the Biscay area is that a concerted assault towards Brest and its key installation might prove to be possible. The Biscay also has one subtle advantage. If South France is evacuated to meet the threat from the Biscay area and the second invasion, the Allied player can end run to Marseilles via Sete and open up a new supply source and a new landing area while still retaining the threat of a second invasion. Finally, one potential disadvantage for the Allied player that could result from stretching the German along the Loire is that the redeployment of troops back to England for participation and exploitation of the second invasion might be difficult since many units will be committed well inland.

In most cases Normandy, Brittany, and Biscay will probably not be viable second invasion choices if the first invasion has been successful. These are too far west to put any significant additional pressure on the Germans. One possible exception might be a Normandy invasion in conjunction with a first invasion in Biscay to cut off German units. Also, in the unlikely event that the first invasion has been hemmed in at Pas de Calais (unlikely, if the invasion force is hemmed in it is more likely to be eliminated entirely) or South France, one of these areas might relieve the pressure and open offensive options.

The final potential invasion area to investigate is South France. This area provides a number of distinct advantages. Supply ports are plentiful and Marseilles is a major prize. Buildup capacity is excellent. It will be difficult for the German player to quickly reinforce defenders in the area. An end run towards Bordeaux is always possible, and such a move can be supplied from Marseilles. Such a gambit forces either a definite German commitment in the West or its gradual abandonment. German forces committed to battles in the south will be distant from at least some second invasion areas. As might be expected with an invasion area that has so many advantages, there are disadvantages, many of them major. There are no nearby critical installations, thus delaying the appearance of Allied replacements. The Rhone Valley provides a number of successively excellent defensive positions for the Germans. Thus, the invasion force will move slowly (although the German must guard against paratroop drops that isolate the defenders). This bitter battle northward, however, may inflict meaningful casualties on the Germans. Also, as was the case in the Biscay area, redeployment to England to participate in the second invasion may not be easy. A final disadvantage is that the southern invasion can only threaten that portion of the Rhine that is most easily defended. In regards to second invasion possibilities, South France may be as ideal as it was historically. It is likely to be lightly defended at this point, and a major supply base is captured. While Allied victory conditions are not likely to be met from the south in the whole, German forces would be diverted from the more vulnerable north. A few divisions across the southern Rhine in the mountains near Switzerland would be hard to dislodge, making northern assaults easier and limiting the number of divisions that would have to be maintained across the Rhine in the north.

The preceding discussion will benefit from the inclusion of some general comments in regard to the invasions. Since it is generally considered that a defeat in the first invasion attempt is tantamount to eventual defeat for the Allied player, the first goal is to get ashore and establish a secure beachhead. The

only possible exception to Allied defeat resulting from a failure of the first invasion would be a case in which German casualties were so high that the German victory is a pyrric one. As a result, undefended or lightly defended invasion areas have special prominence, notwithstanding the various advantages and disadvantages already mentioned. These factors, however, are only relevant when a choice exists between two or more areas. The placement of the German mobile reaction formations as reserves is another important consideration. If they are distant or can be kept distant by air interdiction, the chances for the consolidation of the chosen beachhead are much improved.

If the German player opts for a gambling defense similar to the one presented by Beyma, then the various comments above become quite relevant. Since a successful landing is problematic in any area, other factors become important. In addition to all the above items, the wide dispersal of German mobile units necessitated by a gambling beach defense enhances the chances of successful Allied exploitation off the beaches if some of the initial units make it ashore. Another option for the German player, as discussed by Beyma, is an initial or early defense of the Seine line. The Allied player should probably welcome such a move since the initial landing will be unopposed. Units can be quickly deployed through a number of invasion areas, and the Allied forces can initiate action much closer to Germany before German replacements begin to appear to hinder the assault on the Rhine. Effective pressure in the southern part of the line might successfully unhinge the whole defensive strategy. Breaking the Seine line may be costly, but probably will not be either time consuming or particularly difficult. Careful 1-1 or 1-2 assaults can dislodge the Germans essential for its success as a defensive position. Even the defense shown by Beyma is not invulnerable to a 3-1 assault since the unit in Troyes could be attacked at 3-1 with the drop of two paratroop units and appropriate soakoffs. This defensive position is easier to crack if the battles for the beaches were of some length as some of the key panzer units will more than likely have been removed as casualties. A final point: it is possible that the Seine line can be taken in the rear by the second invasion, not only dislodging the defending forces, but very likely isolating some of them as well.

A few final comments in regard to *D-DAY* itself and the invasion areas are also appropriate. Except for the Le Havre area, none of these areas are totally lacking in long term advantages for the Allied player if chosen for a first invasion. Thus, the German player cannot ever feel that he loses little by not defending Biscay or South France, for example. In fact, both areas could greatly strain the German player in a number of important respects. Of course, the second invasion becomes critical in many cases if Biscay or South France is the scene of the first invasion. The second invasion choice rests upon the success of the first invasion, German and Allied losses, territory held, availability and placement of German reserves, the chances of successfully establishing a beachhead, and so forth. On the whole, the various invasion areas provide numerous advantages for the Allied player to achieve whatever goals seem important to him. It speaks well for the design that all the invasion areas have both definite advantages and distinct disadvantages. And, the game has endless variations. Different defensive strategies may be met by different invasion strategies. Games of *D-DAY* are not doomed to an unsatisfying sameness. There will remain ever-new opportunities, as well as the scope for flair and daring that so many wargamers look for in a "classic". Within this context, it is the preferences and skills of the player that becomes the deciding factor, as should be the case in a good game.



Dear Mr. Martin:

We have enjoyed Avalon Hill's games and publications for a long time, particularly those wargames dealing with WW2. In fact, between us we own 49 Avalon Hill games, have played over 33 different Avalon Hill games, have been playing them for a total of 20 years, have *GENERAL* subscriptions and back issues totaling over 10 years, have been AREA rated for 4 years, and are still going strong. All in all, we've been happy with what Avalon Hill has put out—that is, until recently.

What first enticed us to read *The GENERAL* was the fact that it included numerous articles on the games we are most interested in—wargames. Lately the material covered in the magazine has been anything but. The number of articles dealing with war and wargames has dropped, even though *The GENERAL* has doubled in size in the last four years. The cover no longer carries the pictures and drawings representing the more exciting encounters of war as on the boxes of your wargames; instead the cover stories are now featuring Sci-Fi and Role Playing Fantasy Games. In our opinion, you might as well change the name of the magazine to *Space Cadet* or *Fantasy Land* being that you've already changed the subject matter of it.

If the material covered in this magazine remains in its current sub-standard format, we are sorry to say that neither of us will be renewing our subscriptions. We hope that we will have reason to renew our subscriptions and know that we are not alone in our opinion of *The GENERAL*. We look forward to a better selection of material.

John S. Galvin & Richard Pepe
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

A few gamer/readers have in the past voiced the same sentiments. However, the overwhelming majority enjoy the spice that an occasional piece on our fantasy and science-fiction line brings. Many have written thanking us for featuring an article on such that led them to purchase and enjoy the game in question. Of course, there are those few who would see more fantasy and sci-fi gaming material in our pages—since Avalon Hill has no other periodical devoted to their tastes. But to those narrow-sighted few, as to those who demand only "wargame" coverage, I point out that balance is best. And that is precisely what we strive for—a balanced coverage of our vast range of games.

The GENERAL's recent coverage is, if anything given the number of fantasy and science-fiction titles in our line or their sales figures, overbalanced in favor of traditional historical themes. However, since I tend to favor historical gaming, it is inevitable that more coverage is given to these games. Your comment on the covers is even more childish, a trivial point that is unbelievable in its expression.

In short, I am sorry if you are disappointed in our content. But if such disappointment leads you to drop your subscription, I can only feel sorry for you. You've obviously limited your outlook, encouraging a "snobishness" and infantile discrimination in the hobby that will keep you from enjoying the wide range of fine games in our hobby—no matter their "subject". Too bad.

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin:

I very much enjoyed *The GENERAL*—Vol. 20, No. 4—especially Nicky Palmer's analysis of *FREEDOM IN THE GALAXY* which I now intend to buy in the near future. I also was impressed by Rick Mathew's "Alone Against the Bugs", which is indeed playable and is lending itself very nicely to some adaptations of my own. This is precisely the type of material I hope to see more of in your pages.

I understand the majority of your readers (and game buyers as a whole) are devoted to WW2 games. I was therefore surprised and overjoyed to find nearly an entire issue on the alternate areas of adventure gaming. I expect you may have received a *blitzkrieg* of mail from junior panzer leaders whose turrets were put out of join by this and the recent fantasy issue. Please accept this letter as a note of gratitude and relief from someone involved in the hobby for over 15 years who derives no pleasure in simulating our most recent madnesses.

Gregory Palmer
Flushing, New York

★★★★★

Gentlemen,

I have heard that *UP FRONT* sales are not setting any records. I regard this as a mixed bless-

Letters to the Editor . . .

ing. On the one hand, *UP FRONT* has the potential to draw off the energies of the *SQUAD LEADER* designers, players and playtesters. In that sense I welcome the news that the system is not catching on. Since I bought the game in August, I have spent more time with *UP FRONT* than with *SL*, a truism for most players I suspect. On the other hand, I realize my attitude is selfish. *UP FRONT* is an excellent system, both in design and in concept. It deserves better treatment. Here are some personal observations on why it might not be selling as well as it should—

1. The box art did not grab me at all. I knew the game was available and so I made a special trip to your Baltimore retail outlet to get my copy. Had I seen the game on a store shelf, I might have bought it, but only because it says "Squad Leader Card Game" on the box. The information on the back of the box tells you very little about the unique flavor of the game. This information makes the game appear extremely complicated (which it isn't) and that each play is in itself a separate set of complications. This is a totally false impression. Smoothness of play is hallmark of the system. And that each playing piece has its own personality, literally, makes each game an adventure.

2. The price is a hurdle. Many of us buy games on impulse. The \$25.00 price tag dampens this impulse, especially for a completely unknown product described as a "card game." I like to play war games, not "cards." You want me to risk \$25.00 on something brand new that I don't play anyway? I think this is what too many have said, and they are now missing out by not trying *UP FRONT*. There is much more than \$25.00 worth of wargaming here!

3. The rules for *UP FRONT* are a paradox. They are both simple and complex. For the individual who has never seen the game and has no idea of what it is all about, the rules are very formidable. When I read the rules of a new game, I go hunting for familiar concepts. This whole game is a new concept, from beginning to end. Not only that, but your rules writing ability has gotten too good for your own benefit. The rules in *UP FRONT* are void of ambiguities. They represent the best first edition rules written for a game of this scope and detail I've ever seen. But for the novice trying to get into the system, the very comprehensiveness and precision of the rules are an obstacle in themselves. On the other hand, if someone teaches you the game, usually by simply playing one open hand, the system is a breeze to learn. You can be into an exciting fire fight and playing competently in 30 minutes. In five games you can be into the advanced rules.

4. The next observation has a broader base. Your Managing Editor refuses to rate games on the basis of suitability for solitaire play. Do you realize how many people buy games for that reason alone? Only all of your closet wargamers with disposable cash. If the truth were known, these people probably keep you solvent. Even though I am more up front (sorry about that!) about my own gaming, I still like solitaire play. I go through the 'zines looking for games that can be played solitaire and I buy them. *UP FRONT* plays very well solitaire, and you should let everyone know it. You can play all the game's scenarios solitaire, and you can do some really neat DYO's.

I was fortunate enough to have a *SL* partner who is both smart and persistent. He taught me *UP FRONT* after I had given up and concluded nothing would ever replace *SL*. Since then, I have taught two others who won't play the dreaded *SL*.

UP FRONT is a great product even though its newness has caused some of us to hesitate. The system has one hell of a lot of galmour. A lousy player can challenge a good player and still have a great time . . . even winning if he's lucky. As a devotee of *SL*, I say keep this game a secret. As a devotee of the hobby of wargaming, I say promote it to the maximum. Just be careful you don't put yourself out of business when we all put away *SL*. It's that good.

John E. Loth, Jr.
Herndon, Virginia

*Let anyone get the wrong idea, *UP FRONT* is hardly a sales disaster—it just hasn't become another Cabbage Patch doll. Which is surprising and disappointing to us because we think it is the most exciting new game we've seen. However, the sales race doesn't always go to the first out of the gate. *SQUAD LEADER* was a relatively slow*

*mover during its initial year and really didn't generate great numbers until the release of *CROSS OF IRON* the next year. The reviews for *UP FRONT* have been universally favorable and word of mouth enthusiasm may yet make it a runaway best seller.*

As for the solitaire play, like most games designed for two players, it is best played in that format. However, a passable solitaire version can be played by simply requiring that all attacks must be predesignated before any are resolved. That, coupled with a prohibition against looking at newly drawn cards until the next turn (or after all opposing attacks are declared) will preserve at least a shadow of the uncertainty which the game thrives on.

★★★★★

Dear Rex:

Enough is enough. To allow precious space in *The GENERAL* to be used to print letters from people who don't enjoy gaming and can't understand why we do is truly a waste. I admire your gifted use of words and facts to hold up our colors in front of Mr. Williams and Mr. Paul, but a gardener shouldn't waste his time watering weeds. As for the Mr. Werlane types who always want to move on to new games instead of becoming competent at one or two of the many fine ones already available, I doubt that he will ever find satisfaction.

My point here is that by printing negative letters, you have all of us pondering the negative points that we really don't care about. There are so many positive things going today in the gaming world to think about: the move into computer gaming, role playing, revisions of old favorites, variants, etc.; let's hear more letters from these people.

I'm basically a one game player—the *SQUAD LEADER* system—but at *ORIGINS '83* I was so impressed by the outbursts of noise from the *DIPLOMACY* players that I've gone back through my old issues of *The GENERAL* to read some of the past articles on the game in order to try to understand the source of their excitement. I do read most of the articles in *The GENERAL*; maybe not the first or second time through it, but before the next issue is in my mailbox I will have gotten around to them. I don't always understand or agree with them, but most are well-written, enjoyable, informative. But . . . I am tired of hearing from the whine butts in the Letters section. It is a waste of space in your fine magazine. Let's have more positive letters and enjoy, enjoy.

Jim Blankenship
Saginaw, Michigan

I don't ask that you "ponder the negative points"—merely ponder.

★★★★★

Dear Rex,

I am very sorry to say that the event which we had been preparing for such a long time did not come into being. Though some time has already passed since last September, I still feel a bit disappointed.

There have been many reasons for our failure, but the chief one was of political character. Some actions have been undertaken against the organization of the event. The situation in the country is very tense and it does not help to promote any friendly contacts between the people on both sides of the "Iron Curtain". This is what I feel, at least. But the idea of an international wargame meeting is worth coming back to one of these days.

For me the aborted project has proved very fruitful, anyhow. I have obtained some valuable information. I have been lucky enough to get to know quite a lot of interesting people, whose proficiency in our hobby I appreciate very much. I am sure most of our long-distance contacts will survive and they promise further co-operation. I wish I had known these men before. Then things might be better now.

What I knew about Western wargaming was rather scarce. It used to come from various sources, some of which were not reliable. I believed that in the US there were many strong clubs with wide international contacts, and the gamers were unified, governed by internationally accepted, constant rules and that they were all better at *THIRD REICH* than I was. I guessed that the

wargaming movement was highly organized and well-experienced. If there was a strong, organized international movement, our mutual contacts would be much easier. This is why we were so anxious to get some games from you and to comply with the rules which govern the wargaming hobby, instead of creating some new ones. We are at the beginning now, and you have gone quite far.

We have been sent a good deal of letters from America. Some of the senders wanted to play games by mail which we have not got or even have not heard about; some just wanted to learn about us; and some were from the best experts you may know. I have not heard from any club or federation though. So we were unable to persuade the various Polish organizations to finance our event, as they were not certain there would be a foreign body willing to finance our participation (and travel expenses) in a similar event abroad in regard to ours. To crown all, on 16th June I was informed that a parcel of a dozen or so wargames from the US had been confiscated as the contents of the games "were directed against the military treaties of Poland".

This is to be our beginning. I think it a good one, as—in my view—it is still too early to organize an international convention of players in this country. Nevertheless, we realize that the future of international wargaming depends on people like you and a few others. I also think it very important to start as soon as possible. The first step would be to write a world history and general theory of wargaming. At the very least, the terminology should be uniform; somebody should write something like a encyclopedia of wargaming and a code for international tournaments. All of this would create a theoretical basis for organization of unified, thoroughly tested games in countries where there is little tradition of popular wargaming. With respect to this, I would suggest to mature hobbyists to think about organization of a "gentlemen's society", gathering the best from all over the world (proven designers and gamers) who could lay the foundation for such. Then we would at least know "who's who" and "what's what" in the field.

We have been very glad to get so many letters from the readers of your magazine. At the same time, we are sorry that due to the present situation in our country and our position, we are not able to offer much more than our friendly feelings. Yet we are going to do all we can to promote the wargaming hobby here. If we fail in any undertaking, please remember it will not be due to our reluctance or negligence. The world around us is often cruel and we cannot help it. We are very happy that you have all supported and helped us. Our position has deteriorated remarkably lately; our contacts with the Western gamers have become scarce and the stream of Western wargames has diminished. If you would consider any form of help, we would most appreciate any second-hand games or back copies of wargame magazines. (I mean, of course, games which cannot be regarded as controversial from the political point of view—those dealing with the ancient world or middle ages up to WWI serve as a guide). Such assistance would help us survive the worst of times.

Finally, if the organizers of your *ORIGINS* convention could offer a visit to the event, it would be fabulous. We would love to send someone—one expert gamer, English-speaking, an observer/lecturer rather than a player. He could see how the experts do it, getting to meet all of you. We need experience in organization work and knowledge of the richness of our hobby, and the new friendships and contacts would be wonderful. For our club, this would be something great. I cannot say more at the moment, but we will do all we can. Perhaps, he could even travel at his own expense if the *ORIGINS* people could provide room and board. We would welcome any contact with them.

Again, I am both sorrowful and hopeful. I want to thank you and all of Avalon Hill for your efforts.

Tadeusz Urbanowicz
Warszawa, Poland

*The difficulties that Mr. Urbanowicz and his organization face are awesome, and I suspect that this will not be the last set-back they experience. I would hope that the hobby leaders, both professional and amateur, in this country extend a hand of support to them. Certainly an excellent step in this direction would be a formal invitation by the *ORIGINS* organizers next year to one or more of the Polish gamers, along with room and board provided from their funds. Their thirst for knowledge, and the extent to which they will go to enjoy it, are heartening to this cynical observer. There is a lesson there for all of us in this hobby.*

UP FRONT

3.6 When a scenario states that a certain type of card must be removed from the deck when discarded unused or as a RNC/RPC draw, is it considered a "scenario defined Cover card"?

A. Yes; in other words, a Buildings card can never be placed during Prepare For Play in Scenario A.

4.3 & 14.5 During a multi-card discard, can a player observe the results of one discard before deciding where and/or if to discard another?

A. No.

7.32 Can a group with pinned men reject terrain?

A. Yes.

7.32 Can a player with a multi-card discard capability, discard one terrain card on a group, have it rejected, and still discard another terrain card on the same group in the same turn? Even if the two were discarded simultaneously?

A. No.

10.2 Can you play a Rally card on a group with no pinned men in order to get it out of your hand?

A. No!

16.4 Do you really mean that no VPs are awarded for moving men at the end of a Scenario even if they are at range chit 5?

A. Yes, that's the risk you take when waiting for the relative artificial safety of the end of the deck to move. The rule was created especially to discourage such unrealistic tactics.

UP FRONT

Unique Card Game of WW2 Tactical Combat

Only once in a great while in our hobby is a game truly different and innovative. It is rare that the hoary old concepts are abandoned and that a playable, enjoyable challenge results. With *UP FRONT*, it would appear that the readers agree that this is one such time. The Overall Value certainly places it among the top titles in our listing. And, indeed, in every category *UP FRONT* ranks well below the average.

Two obvious strong points spring to mind when glancing over the reader-generated ratings for *UP FRONT*. First, the components are of obvious quality and clarity. The colorful cards drew a number of compliments, both on their graphics and their obvious utility and durability in the game mechanics. The counters are clear and precise, uncluttered with extraneous devices. The Personality Cards proved popular, many players asking that more nationalities be included (the recent release of *BANZAI* brings the Japanese and British). Despite a few readers expressing confusion on the appropriate categories, all the "Components" ratings are superior in our line.

Secondly, and more important, the ratings for Playability, Excitement Level and Play Balance are among the best ever seen. *UP FRONT* brings a rapid paced (note the Game Length category), challenging and exciting game to those who have mastered the intricacies of the rules. This is obviously a game for *gamers*, certainly the

best rendering of man-to-man combat yet seen despite—or perhaps because of—its departure from the usual approaches. Even when losing, the players seem engrossed in the play, sure mark of a "classic" game.

UP FRONT joins the ongoing Reader's Buyer Guide Chart. The ratings for all categories are as follows:

Overall Value: 2.42

Components: 2.26

Map: —

Counters: 2.01

Player's Aids: 2.36

Complexity: 4.47

Completeness of Rules: 2.57

Playability: 1.31

Excitement Level: 1.89

Play Balance: 1.58

Authenticity: 2.84

Game Length

Shortest: 48 mins.

Longest: 2 hrs., 10 mins.

Year: 1983

Sample Base: 58

\$25.00

THE QUESTION BOX

16.42 Would a Wire card on top of a Wall card negate that group for Victory Conditions fulfillment if an opposing group exists which is not directly opposite it?

A. No, even if no opposing group were directly opposite it to be affected by the TEM; the wall card is not reduced to total ineffectiveness and therefore can be used to fulfill Victory Conditions . . . unless there are two Wire cards on it. Similarly, an occupied Hill's +1 modifier cannot be used to negate the defender's TEM for purpose of fulfilling Victory Conditions.

17.1 & 17.7 Can you play a Flank card sideways merely to allow you to change terrain or ford a stream without gaining either of those benefits?

A. Yes.

17.613 Are the panic values reduced for purposes of rout resolution?

A. No. The Panic value is decreased; not the Rout formula on the back of each man's card.

17.62 If an encircled group retreats so that *both* the encircling groups are in front of it, but still closer than Relative Range 1 is the encirclement broken?

A. Yes.

17.7 When making a Lateral Group Transfer can another Movement card be subsequently played on one of the involved groups in the forward/reverse made before completing the transfer by placement of a Terrain card?

A. No.

17.8 Can a man being transferred between stationary groups be affected by a red To Hit RNC draw?

A. Yes, as per 25.31, the transferred man is affected the same as the defending target group.

17.8 May a man make an Individual Transfer into or from a group that has a Movement card in play from a previous turn?

A. Yes; add "and may not move *from that range chit* until a turn after the transfer chit is removed."

17.8 Can men in the process of individual transfer fire?

A. Yes, and as part of either group, but by including them in an attack the Fire Strength of that attack must be halved as Moving Fire even though the remainder (and perhaps the majority of the firing group) was not moving. However, only

those men engaged in the transfer would be subject to halving of Firepower for their Bolt Action rifles, and the player always has the option of attacking without the transferring men so as to avoid the Moving Fire penalty.

19.13 & 19.14 These rules seem contradictory on the malfunction of a weapon of a designated Assistant crewman; which is correct?

A. Both are. Rule 19.14 refers to already malfunctioned weapons and those of pinned men and takes precedence over 19.13 when either of those conditions exist. In other words, the weapon of a designated assistant crewman is safe from malfunction unless he is pinned or that weapon has already malfunctioned.

19.15 If a fully-crewed LMG is using its bracketed FP to fire from a Stream, does it malfunction on a red 5 RNC?

A. Yes.

19.3 & 20.56 Can more than one repair attempt be made per group per turn or can more than one man drop his infiltrator status per group per turn?

A. No; "sole action".

20.8 Is the last played terrain card of an infiltrated group which has been eliminated while in the act of a double move subject to capture?

A. No—because it is occupying Open Ground. However, that Open Ground could be captured by claiming the first Movement card and flipping it over.

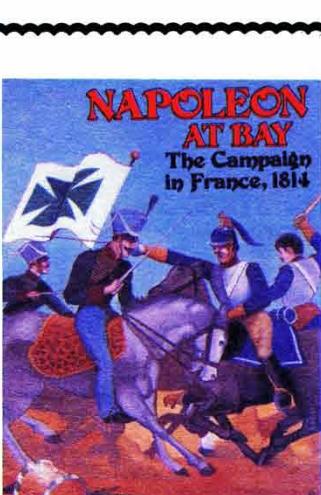
AVALON HILL RBG RATING CHARTS

The following Avalon Hill games are ranked by their reader-generated overall Value rating. Further aspects of reader response to our titles are indicated by the ratings in other categories. By breaking down a game's ratings into these individual categories, the gamer is able to discern for himself where the title's strengths and weaknesses lie in the qualities he values highly. Readers are reminded that the Game Length categories are measured in multiples of ten minutes (thus, a rating of "18" equates to three hours).

WARGAME RBG

Title	Overall Value	Components	Complexity	Completeness of Rules	Playability	Authenticity	Game Length	Shortest	Longest	Year	Sample Base
1. GI	2.02	1.93	10	3.01	3.38	1.88	12.84	35.33	1982	264	
2. COI	2.06	1.95	9	3.29	3.13	1.99	11.61	29.27	1978	532	
3. 3R	2.21	2.67	10	3.81	3.40	2.73	25.94	69.24	1981	273	
4. COD	2.23	1.97	10	3.12	3.08	1.85	12.15	30.20	1980	224	
5. TRC	2.29	2.53	4	2.52	2.12	3.11	17.44	37.74	1976	540	
6. SL	2.31	2.09	8	3.48	2.87	2.45	10.17	27.90	1977	680	
7. UF	2.42	2.26	4	2.57	1.31	2.84	4.84	13.05	1983	58	
8. B-17	2.51	2.62	3	2.52	1.86	2.21	3.30	11.50	1983	87	
9. WS&IM	2.53	3.04	6	2.93	2.67	2.39	7.01	34.90	1975	464	
10. W&P	2.61	2.76	5	3.46	2.93	3.04	13.04	57.19	1980	374	
11. BB'81	2.67	2.46	4	2.53	2.94	2.91	19.62	35.09	1981	277	
12. TLD	2.68	1.95	8	3.72	3.54	2.04	24.44	170.68	1980	119	
13. VITP	2.72	2.86	2	2.89	2.22	4.52	16.96	22.36	1977	420	
14. CAE	2.85	3.01	4	2.32	2.89	2.52	25.14	32.57	1976	252	
15. SON	2.92	3.03	10	3.72	4.09	1.92	29.50	81.78	1981	123	
16. SOA	2.97	2.79	3	2.73	2.41	3.88	18.22	22.57	1981	232	
17. FE	3.00	2.72	7	3.21	3.21	3.00	21.17	49.05	1980	345	
18. FRED	3.00	3.41	4	2.93	2.58	2.75	12.25	24.67	1983	58	
19. SUB	3.08	2.64	8	3.13	3.08	2.74	9.41	26.15	1978	281	
20. MD	3.13	3.51	3	2.80	2.21	3.44	14.75	20.74	1964	395	
21. AZ	3.17	2.72	7	3.18	3.86	2.68	18.63	63.40	1978	292	
22. PL	3.19	2.94	7	3.31	3.13	3.50	9.49	25.80	1974	479	
23. 1776	3.21	2.97	7	3.09	3.03	3.10	10.16	45.09	1974	373	
24. FT	3.23	3.12	10	3.22	3.67	3.16	24.51	57.39	1981	196	
25. PB	3.35	3.08	6	3.73	2.90	3.94	10.35	23.07	1970	448	
26. BIS	3.45	2.96	6	3.43	3.25	3.06	12.41	26.35	1979	248	
27. AAOC	3.52	2.95	5	3.02	3.26	3.07	15.52	26.53	1978	239	
28. FITW	3.53	3.14	4	3.17	2.94	3.72	16.14	30.01	1981	100	
29. CL	3.54	3.35	5	3.15	3.33	3.79	12.53	25.53	1975	136	
30. DL	3.61	4.02	7	3.85	3.22	3.29	6.66	19.94	1981	120	
31. GOA	3.66	3.37	5	3.67	3.79	2.98	18.68	60.06	1981	297	
32. WAS	3.71	3.67	1	2.48	2.37	5.98	9.09	12.71	1976	396	
33. GE	3.72	3.12	6	4.64	4.41	2.84	13.25	57.13	1977	248	
34. AF	3.74	4.16	7	3.98	3.34	3.35	5.61	16.02	1980	192	
35. AIW	3.74	3.05	8	2.92	3.52	3.06	8.69	25.36	1977	308	
36. LRT	3.75	3.60	4	3.53	3.39	2.96	13.04	17.00	1982	56	
37. TR	3.80	3.76	3	3.33	3.60	3.70	9.51	25.79	1980	72	
38. WAT	3.83	4.17	2	2.95	2.64	5.00	17.08	23.13	1962	296	
39. NP	3.87	3.29	3	3.27	2.56	4.89	9.69	14.40	1978	159	
40. AK	3.92	4.38	2	3.30	2.48	5.09	14.49	19.13	1964	492	
41. AL	4.03	4.05	5	3.69	3.18	3.57	12.34	17.93	1974	217	
42. TB	4.06	3.53	7	3.48	4.47	2.50	11.28	32.50	1975	304	
43. RW	4.14	3.14	5	3.32	2.91	3.98	4.22	21.15	1973	311	
44. JU	4.17	3.20	6	3.61	3.83	3.22	16.01	36.66	1974	193	
45. PAA	4.17	4.24	5	3.79	3.99	3.70	15.51	25.24	1981	144	
46. DD	4.22	4.07	2	3.04	2.88	4.64	17.54	26.25	1977	367	
47. CH	4.39	3.80	4	3.35	3.52	4.67	14.76	24.96	1961	140	
48. STAL	4.39	4.29	2	2.88	2.75	5.83	20.57	28.85	1963	320	
49. LW	4.45	3.75	5	3.77	3.79	4.79	13.36	34.14	1971	372	
50. FR	4.79	3.49	4	3.47	3.75	4.06	16.27	26.95	1972	244	
51. BL	4.73	4.16	7	3.65	3.77	5.27	20.43	41.44	1965	336	
52. TAC	5.62	5.25	1	2.79	3.23	6.34	11.70	19.29	1961	285	

COMING UP NEXT TIME



As usual, the readership was quite vocal in their response to our efforts with Vol. 20, No. 5; pleasingly, most of them were quite complimentary. The overall rating (2.98) reflected their approval. Ironically, the Series Replay of *BULL RUN* topped the ratings—despite the fact that it was uncompleted in the issue (meaning, I suppose, considerable interest in the following issue—Vol. 20, No. 6). The ratings for the individual articles of the issue—based as usual on a random sampling of two hundred responses with values of “3”, “2” and “1” assigned to the first, second and third choices of those responding—are as follows:

BULL RUN SERIES REPLAY	296
KING OF THE HILL	184
REBEL YELL	169
FIRST BLOOD	136
A KING'S OFFICER	120
THE COMPLEAT DIPLOMAT	72
WEST POINT'S FINEST	69
AH PHILOSOPHY	49
EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE ATTACK	40
NORTHFIELD	26
NUTMAIL	24
THE BLUE & THE GREY	15

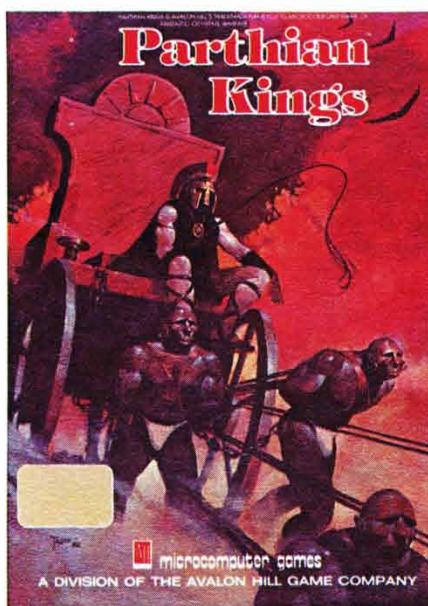
A little less than three years after we announced the opening of the AREA POSTAL CHAMPIONSHIP Tournaments, we have our first winner. Congratulations are due Bruce Remsburg of Ormond Beach, Florida for topping fourteen other entrants and the advancing years for his title. Bruce now reigns as our defending *PANZER-BLITZ* champion and stands ready to defend his crown against all comers in accordance with the rules of championship play set forth in Vol. 28, No. 1 of The *GENERAL*. All those interested in toppling the king from his throne have a period of 90 days from this notice to make their challenge by contacting Don Greenwood at Avalon Hill with an estimate of their current AREA rating. All challengers must be AREA rated and submit the two-game series to AREA rating. No game fee is necessary to challenge the champion, but only one challenger (the highest AREA rating) will be selected for the initial assault on the title.

For the many novices who want to become involved in the broad postal *DIPLOMACY* hobby in the United States, Mr. Bruce Linsey (73 Ashuelot Street #3, Dalton, MA 01226) publishes a special guide to the pbm activities for this classic game. Articles on 'zines, conventions, services and organizations is concise and complete. Copies of *Supernova* are only \$1.00, and well worth the price for the information contained.

The decision not to reprint the *WARGAMER'S GUIDE TO MIDWAY* has been taken due to the press of other projects. Once current stocks are sold out, this helpful reprint of the best of past articles on the game from our pages will be unavailable except from collectors. Containing articles by Totten, Greenwood, Moon, Gutenkunst and other experts on the game as well as rules for the popular Coral Sea Variant, the Guide is recommended to all interested in *MIDWAY*. Only a few copies remain on the shelves, but can be ordered from Avalon Hill. If you want a copy, best order as soon as possible.

In the July issue of *Electronic Games*, the praises of *PARTHIAN KINGS* are sung. One of the latest offerings from the Microcomputer Division of Avalon Hill, it has drawn quite favorable and extensive comment in that select hobby. Indeed, the Avalon Hill Microcomputer line seems to go from strength to strength, with recent releases *PANZER-JAGD* and *UNDER SOUTHERN SKIES* drawing raves among reviewers.

Infiltrator's Report



microcomputer games
A DIVISION OF THE AVALON HILL GAME COMPANY

Speaking of computer games, Avalon Hill's Microcomputer Games Division has plans for a number of exciting new titles to be released in 1984. *Computer Diplomacy* for IBM PC, 256K with beautiful hi-res graphics is a one- to seven-player game based on the classic board game. For those with a taste for the salt spray and wild wind, *Clear For Action* is a wargame loosely based on the popular tactical simulation *WOODEN SHIPS & IRON MEN*, ship-to-ship combat in the age of sail. *Gulf Strike* is a computerization of the Victory Game title of the same name. *Panzers East* moves us to the East Front, as the Wehrmacht mounts its last offensive on Moscow. *Ram!* is yet another naval computer game, based on combat in the ancient days of glory. Drawing its inspiration from *CIVILIZATION*, *Incunabula* is stirring every playtester of it to paeans of praise. For a change of pace, *Ripper!* is an all-text adventure and an intriguing, engaging mystery based on the crazed murderer who terrorized London a century ago; bolstered by printed material to assist, play evolves around a clandestine meeting of the time's greatest personalities, complicated when one invitation is confiscated by (who else?) The Ripper. Along with conversion of various popular titles to Commodore and IBM computers, these projects should keep the programmers of Avalon Hill quite busy. And bring computer owners hours of entertainment when released.

Contest 117 seems to have thrown more than one reader for a “tizzy”. Of over 30 entries, only seven realized that the key lay in breaking brigade with Bee and Kershaw and, at the same time, managed to move without breaking any of the rules of *BULL RUN*. Despite some quibbles over exact placement, each of the seven created a viable defense which avoided allowing the Union player an attack and blocked him from breaching the line. A ten dollar gift certificate is awarded to each of the following: Jim Burnett, Clinton, TN; George Calebaugh, Brooklyn Park, MN; John Grant, Jr., Stamford, CT; Robert Hill, Fort Myers, FL; Bill Milligan, New Paltz, NY; Jeff Scholz, Wyoming, MI; Joseph Sterner, Columbus, OH. Ironically, all the winners come from states that were engaged in the conflict; there is a moral somewhere there.

The correct solution to Contest 118 is based on the realization that Lancaster No. 3 is a “red herring”, the Me-110 is a very unmaneuverable brute, and the best plan calls for stalking Lancaster No. 4 for that one best shot while taking advantage of those flexible guns for a “bonus” shot. The winning moves are shown below:

TURN	In. Speed	In. Altitude	In. Bank	Moves		Altitude Change
13	6	13.0	L	5	NI KK	0.8
14	6	12.2	L8	3	SLL PP	0.8
15	6	11.4	L8	6	KK	0.8
16	6	10.6	L8	6	KK	0.8
17	6	9.8	L8	3	L2 P	0.1
18	6	9.9	L8			0.1
19						
20						

Note that the Me-110 fires on Turn 16 and on Turn 17. Shot #1: F guns at two hexes plus 1000 feet = 4 hex range = Table -2, +6 Lancaster silhouette, +1 for 30 degree deflection = Table 5. Shot #2: Nose up attitude. FF and FH guns can both fire in the same hex = 1 hex range = Table 18, +6 Lancaster silhouette, +2 for fire modifier, +2 for same hex from below deflection, +1 Advantage = 29. This means that the winning answers must have indicated a “Total Hit Table Numbers” of 34!

CONVENTION CALENDAR

THE GENERAL will list any gaming convention in this space free of charge on a space available basis provided that we are notified at least four months in advance of the convention date. Each listing must include the name, date, site, and contact address of the convention. Additional information of interest to Avalon Hill gamers such as tournaments or events utilizing AH games is solicited and will be printed if made available.

Avalon Hill does not necessarily attend or endorse these gatherings, nor do we guarantee that events using AH games will be held. Readers are urged to contact the listed sources for further information before making plans to attend.

JULY 27-29

GATEWAY CON II, St. Louis, Missouri
Contact: Stephen Levin, Gateway Conventions, 305 Glyn Cagny, St. Louis, MO 63101.

JULY 28-29

PEERICON IV, San Diego, California
Contact: Larry Peery, P.O. Box 8416, San Diego, CA 92102. (619) 280-2239.
Note: *DIPLOMACY* and *CIVILIZATION*.

AUGUST 3-5

ATLANTICON 84, Towson, Maryland
Contact: Atlanticon 84, P.O. Box 139, Middle-town, NJ 07748.
Note: Wide selection of Avalon Hill events.

AUGUST 16-19

GENCON 84, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin
Contact: Dieter Sturm, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.

SEPTEMBER 29-30

NOWSCON '84, Cleveland Ohio
Contact: John Hartman, Northern Ohio War-gaming Society, P.O. Box 29116, Parma, OH 44129.

OCTOBER 20-21

COGACON 84, Columbus, Ohio
Contact: Paul Riegel, c/o War Game Designs, 6119 East Main Street #202, Columbus, OH 43213. (614) 863-1897.

OPPONENTS WANTED

The Huntsville Gaming Club is looking for members. Meetings twice monthly. Many types of games played. For information please contact: Dudley Kidd, 2421 Redmond Rd., Huntsville, AL 35810. (205) 859-1581.

Veteran wargamer getting no competition. Pbm for A/W-standard and advanced games only. AREA rated 1875+. Rated only. All letters answered. My choice: Arabs. Stephen Yarmey—#7449, ACTC-T, Santa Rita Unit, 10,000 S. Wilmett Road, Tucson, AZ 85717.

14-year old looking for opponents for ff or pbm rated non-rated COI, COD, G.I., PL, WSM, BL and 1R. Jeff Bremer, 3416 Rosemary Lane, Bakersfield, CA 93309. (805) 833-3767.

Needed: ff opponents for SL, COI and COD. Javier Lopez, 737 Redwood Ave., El Segundo, CA 90245. (310) 277-3711.

Novice would like to learn wargame TAC II and SUB. Info on clubs in Santa Monica, Malibu area. Also like air games (LW). Cory Wells, P.O. Box 821, Malibu, CA 90265.

Serious pbm opponents sought to play TRC. One Sovier, one Axis, all letters answered. Larry Davis, 624 S. Sullivan #2A, Santa Ana, CA 92704.

Pbm AK, WAT, Ff CIV, CON, DIP, MA, DUNE, GSL and CM. Joe Marshall, 2231 Emerson, Denver, CO 80205. (303) 763-7408.

Pbm AK, PB, DD, TAC, AREA or not 1200. Prov. system preferred. Any gamers in Four Corners area? Ross Callender, Box 7066, FLC, Durango, CO 81301. (247) 5157.

Veteran gamer wants to play TRC, WAT, ff SL, COI, COD, G.I., PL, PB, DIP, MA, DUNE and CAE. 16 years gaming experience. All letters answered. Brian Bedford, 759 South Reed Court, #B-37, Lakewood, CO 80226. (303) 922-7348.

Recently moved to the area, looking for Game Clubs and players for ff MD, VITP, WSM, CIV and TT. Dennis Peotter, 807 New Haven Ave., Milford, CT 06460. (877) 3020.

Am looking for interested person to help design game. Younger help preferred, am 13. Title: WWII. Jon Acuff, 110 Meadow Road., Riverside, CT 06878. (203) 632-4238.

Players wanted for WSM Tralfager Scenario. Also CIV, CIP, VITP, WAS, MD, 176, DUNE, CON and Statis Pro-Football. Tim Hitchings, 28 Winter Haven Dr., #1, Newark, DE 19702. (302) 737-7676.

Have positions available in two FT pbm games. Own scenarios also interested: ff, MD, FITW, Bruce Perrotta, 6755 NW 4th St., Margate, FL 33063. (305) 971-4067.

16-year old wants ff opponents. Will play JR, FT, WSM and more. AREA rated 2000. Have games 3 years. Darin Spiller, 1950 S. Academy Dr., Melbourne, FL 32901.

Reliable non-fanatic adult seeks non-rated pbm for BL, CL, Civil War, Guadalcanal, 1776, with adult looking to play for enjoyment. Craig Kaster, 3769 Sholar Ct., Baton Rouge, LA 70809. 925-9211.

OPPONENTS WANTED

Wanted pbm opponents area or non-area for BB '81, WAT, DD, AK, Grad. Prefer 21 yrs. or older. Roger Greenzicki, P.O. Box 9265, Baltimore, MD 21222. (410) 477-3880.

Third Reich players! The Buzzard's Breath is for a seven year 'zine carrying PBW, R.W., W.A.P., SOTN. Samples 50¢. Mark Matuschak, 74 Commonwealth Ave., #8, Boston, MA 02116. (617) 266-7744.

Fasty squad leaders wanted for a SL system fit tournament in the Boston area. North Shore to South Shore. Write me soon. Will also pbm, L.W., 1776, A/W and 3R. Brian Post, O.C.T.S., Box 41-B, S. Hamilton, MA 01982.

Wanted pbm: Russian opponent for TRC and American for JR, ff SL, COI, COD, SOA, FE, DIP, 3R and TRC. Don McSweeny, 110 Brookhaven St., Brook Haven, MS 39001. (601) 833-3698.

Very experienced WGER new to pbm. You provide pbm, will play TLD, JR, FE. Especially eager to play 3R. Dougouss. Experienced opponents only! Brian Siegel, 379 Edmund Ave., Paterson, NJ 07502. (201) 942-2408.

Non-area adult (56) Southern Tier gamer wants pbm SL, COI, COD, and GI. Begin with scenario I. Need pbm system. Will answer all responses. Robert C. Fudge, 427-B River Terrace, Endicott, NY 13760. (607) 785-8895.

Postal GM available for CIV, KM, SA, DIP, Low fees, quick deadlines. Also, anyone for ff VG Civil War? Scott Cameron, 4 Meadow Lane, Hicksville, NY 11801.

Ulster County seeking same for ff in BR, W.R., COD and 1776. Bill Milligan, P.O. Box 511, New Paltz, NY 12561. (914) 255-5931.

Any wargamers in Westchester area? I'm looking for opponents for just about any historical AH wargames. Kevin Heagerty, 63 Morningside Dr., Ossining, NY 10562. (914) 941-4825.

Novice adult gamer seeks committed pbm opponent for TRC, BB, PB and SL. Very willing to learn other AH games. Scott C. Rogan, 2242 Louis Kossuth Ave., Ronkonkoma, NY 11779.

10 year old wargame addict will answer all letters, guaranteed! Yes, guaranteed! Pbm, ff, rated, unrated SL, COI, COD, 3R, TRC and GOA. Honor system preferred. Jason Russ, Stonehouse Rd., Somers, NY 10589. (914) 277-8543.

Fif (only) anywhere within 50 miles of Dayton, Ohio AZ, BB, CAA, CH, FE, SL, COI, Jeff Wells, 15 Graywood Ct., Centerville, OH 45459. (513) 424-8818.

Ohio gamers! Join a statewide gamers assoc., SASE for details. All games and all ages. Bob Kindel, Box 24, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44222. (216) 923-5183.

Adult seeks AREA pbm AZ and TRC. Mike Eckhart, RD1, Box 269, Germansville, PA 18053.

I challenge Kevin Zucker to a fit game of SON, NAB, HDB, etc. I have enough AP's to travel. Tom Semian, 430 Boggs Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15211.

OPPONENTS WANTED

Attention! All G.I.'s in NE Ohio and NW Pennsylvania. Contact ERAS for ff play of SL thru G.I. using G.I. rules. Also pbm BL, Classics. ERAS c/o W F Conner, 1630 Ashton Ave., Sharpsville, PA 16150.

Adult gamer seeks opponents for pbm GE/77, SLB, COI and SST. Also looking for systems for W.P. & BIS and L.W. Kevin J. Crawford, 7129 Bedford Road., Upper Darby, PA 19082. (215) 626-3766.

Pbm opponents for TRC AREA 1200+, Russian sending German. Send SASE. I'm Pro-1500 AAA. Other letters answered. Mike Gilbert, 1002 W. Locust St., York, PA 17040. (847) 227-2277.

Average gamer wants to start club need players of ff. Will play ff, CIV, R.W., SUB, GSL. Any AH title. Randy Wiggins, 1611 Lakeland, Cinnabon Ave., 77575, (409) 336-9711.

Adult gamer concentrating on Napoleonics and WW. Would like to expand to SL or FG. Experience in FT. Play for pbm from Washington, DC area. Bernie LeVon, 8620 Village Square, Alexandria, VA 22309. (703) 360-2000.

Polite, the Dale City Journal of negotiations, the Dale City Journal of negotiations, offers announcements of fit multi-player games in the greater Balto-Wash area, including DIP, CIV and R.W. Ed Wrobel, 392 N. Forestdale Ave., Dale City, VA 22193, (703) 470-7889.

Help! Young, amateur (but fairly talented) gamer desperate for pbm competition in DIP, SST, W.P., NP, CIV, PL and AOC. Peter Baker, 6053 River Drive, Lorton, VA 22079. (703) 339-6428.

Experienced adult gamer non-rated wants ff opponents for FF, FITW, W.A.P., FT and most other AH war games. David Mayo, 5337 New Glory Dr., Virginia Beach, VA 23464. (804) 424-1080.

Adult gamer seeks opponents for SL, COI, COD, GI and other AH historical and fantasy titles. Alan Bargender, 2001 S. Vine, #201, Marshfield, WI 54449. (715) 387-0197.

Looking for reliable, adult opponents in Toronto area for ff, SL, VITP, W.A.P., DIP, FE and 3R. Rated or not. Nick Russon, 50 Cambridge Ave., #104, Toronto, Ont. M4K 2L3.

10 year old wargame addict will answer all letters, guaranteed! Yes, guaranteed! Pbm, ff, rated, unrated SL, COI, COD, 3R, TRC and GOA. Honor system preferred. Jason Russ, Stonehouse Rd., Somers, NY 10589. (914) 277-8543.

Fif (only) anywhere within 50 miles of Dayton, Ohio AZ, BB, CAA, CH, FE, SL, COI, Jeff Wells, 15 Graywood Ct., Centerville, OH 45459. (513) 424-8818.

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OPPONENTS WANTED

The "Opponents Wanted" advertisements appearing on this page are intended as a service to the readership of this periodical. This service will continue so long as certain editorial regulations are adhered to strictly. The editors of The GENERAL reserve the right to excise any part of or an entire advertisement should these not be followed.

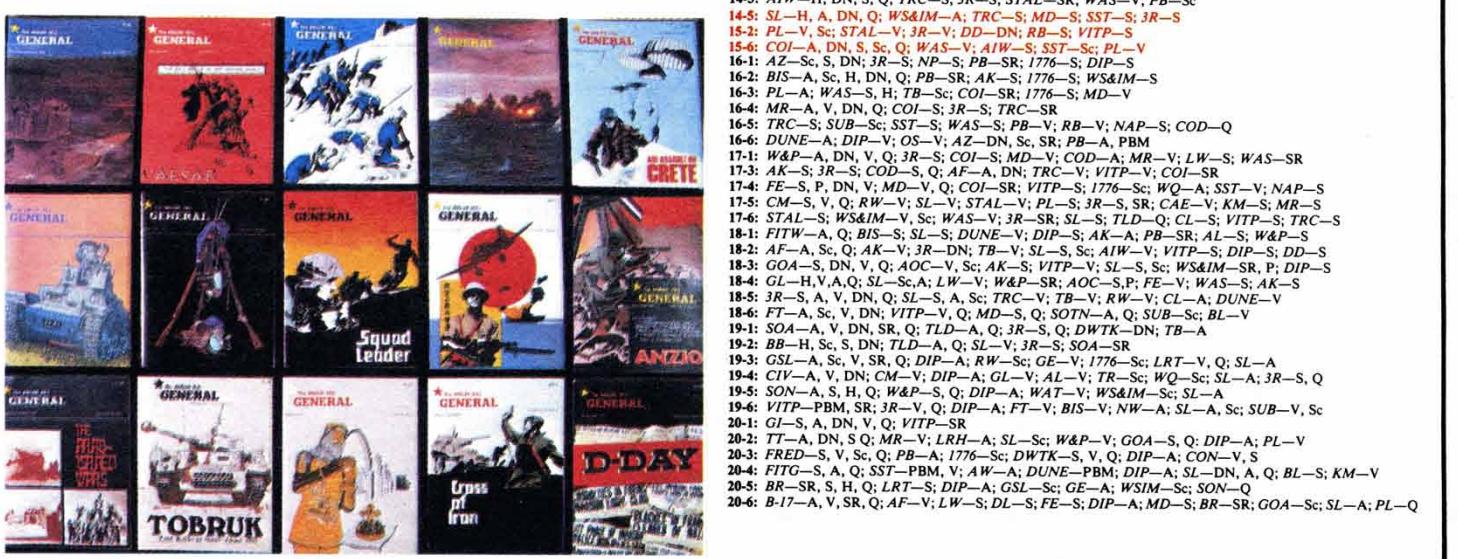
Want-ads will be accepted only when printed on the appropriate form or a reasonable facsimile. Such must be accompanied by the appropriate fee. This may take the form of uncancelled US postage; note that foreign postage is not acceptable. No refunds of this fee will be made, even should the ad not be printed due to failure to conform to AH policies.

Please print or type the ad copy. If the ad is not legible, it will not be printed. Too, no ad dealing with non-AH products will be printed and any mention of such will be excised. Ads are accepted for a single printing only. Should the reader desire that a specific ad enjoy a multiple printing, a separate number of copies equal to the number of times the ad is to be run must be submitted—although only one total payment need be included to cover the printings.

All material in The GENERAL is protected by copyright and reproduction with intent to sell is strictly forbidden. Advertisers may sell photocopies of particular articles from SOLD OUT back issues NO LONGER in stock (for a listing of those issues still in stock, consult the listing at the bottom of this page), provided that they charge no more for this service than their own expenses. Anyone offering such copies for a profit or distributing copies of back issues still available will be in violation of the copyright laws of the United States.

Finally, due to the pressure of various deadlines, often advertisements submitted weeks before an issue appears will not be printed in that issue. Please be patient; such will be printed in the immediately following issue. Please do not specify a particular issue for an ad to appear; such requests cannot be honored.

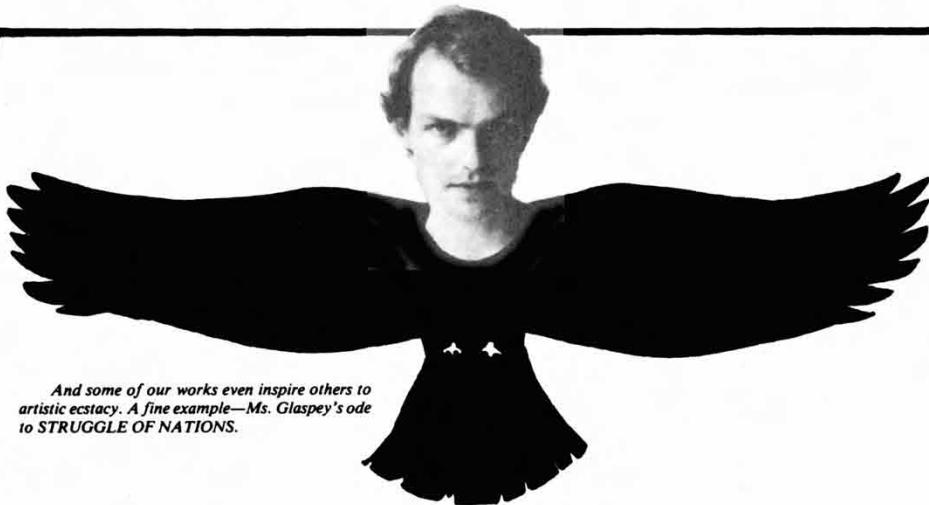
GENERAL BACK ISSUES



EDITOR'S CHOICE AWARDS

This issue marks the beginning of Volume 21 in the life of The Avalon Hill *GENERAL*. It is time once again for the editors to offer their nominations for the best articles of the past year. The winner receives a lifetime subscription to The *GENERAL*, in addition to a \$100.00 bonus. Please vote for only one of the nominees and vote only if you have read all the articles nominated. Eliminating those articles written by paid AH staff members from consideration, we have the following articles to select from:

- FIRST IMPRESSIONS by Bob Medrow, No. 1
- PARA-LEADER by Oscar Oates, No. 2
- CRAFT OF THE SOLDIER-KING by Deane Sperdakos, No. 3
- SUPPLEMENT TO THE COMMANDER'S NOTEBOOK by John Hunter, No. 3
- SCIENCE FICTION FOR THE WARGAMER by Nicky Palmer, No. 4
- A NEW LOOK FOR AN OLD FRIEND by Robert Harmon, No. 4
- KING OF THE HILL by David Bieksza, No. 5
- ZERO! by Michael Anchors, No. 6



And some of our works even inspire others to artistic ecstasy. A fine example—Ms. Glaspey's ode to STRUGGLE OF NATIONS.

The Raved

with profuse and abject apologies to Edgar Allan Poe—

Once upon a midnight dreary, as I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious rule I'd never seen before,
Over Kevin's clash of nations, lost in layered cerebrations,
I was seeking explanations of the game's mandates galore—
Wond'ring, musing, seeking guidance in the maze of rule galore—
Only this, and nothing more.

Then this game, all time transcending (Will you *never* make an ending?
Will you *ever* finish, and be quit of every blasted corps?)
Struck a spark of inner query, like some distant watch-fire eerie,
Just behind my eyeballs bleary: Shall I yet o'er panzers pore?
Can I still crank up the tank, and once again o'er panzers pore?
Quoth the ZUCKER, "Nevermore!"

By Ruth E. Glaspey



AHIKS (pronounced *A-hiks*) is an international society of mature individuals who play historical simulation games by mail. Established in 1966 by adults who had grown tired of easy, immature, sporadic and/or disappearing opponents, AHIKS exists to minimize encounters with such opponents and to facilitate playing by mail.

AHIKS is a vibrant society. They take pride in the high degree of personalization which has characterized the organization from its inception. Many members have become the best of friends over the years, and frequently members get together for face-to-face games or even conventions. Active in many aspects, AHIKS members can be found at every major convention—just stop by their booth. The society is involved in many of the playtests by the larger publishers through their "Playtest Coordinator". And AHIKS numbers the very best competitive gamers among the membership.

AHIKS is indeed international, and seek always to expand their overseas contacts. While a majority of their members currently reside in the United States and Canada, there is a sizable contingent of European players and a growing representation from Japan and Australia. Numerous services are offered to this active membership, with duties delegated to various specialists—the Match Coordinator, the Archivist, the Multi-player Coordinator, and so forth. Too, there is the excellent club newsletter, *The Kommandeur* and its European version *Despatch*.

The success of AHIKS as an international pbm society can best be measured by the large number of games completed between opponents in different nations. This was made possible by development of the *ICRK* (pronounced *ick*) system. This marvelous invention eliminates the need to refer to stock publications or other paraphenalia to resolve the random elements of games, thus cutting across border, language and time difficulties. Game situations requiring die rolls can be resolved in the same convenient and foolproof manner whether the opponent is across the street or across the ocean.

AHIKS membership is open to all, regardless of race, creed, nationality, or sex. Only two requirements are demanded of potential members. One is that all members must play their games promptly, courteously, and to completion. The other is that members (with a few special exceptions determined by the committee of officials) must be 21 years of age or older.

If you enjoy gaming, or lack pbm opponents, you owe it to yourself to check it out. For additional information and/or membership application forms, please contact:

UNITED STATES: Bruce Maston
1404 Union Street
Schenectady, NY 12308

EUROPEAN: Alan White
77 Brackley Road
Hazelmere
High Wycombe
Bucks HP15 7EY, UK

CANADIAN: Casey Bruyn
229 Homewood Avenue
Hamilton, Ontario L8P 2M7

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN PLAYING?

Top ten lists are seemingly always in vogue these days. Whether the subject is books on the Best Seller List, television's Nielsen ratings, or even games, the public never seems to tire of seeing how their individual favorites stack up numerically against the competition. Our preoccupation with this national pastime is almost akin to routing the home team on to victory every Sunday. So to further cater to your whims (and to satisfy our own curiosity) we unveil *THE GENERAL*'s version of the gamer's TOP TEN.

We won't ask you to objectively rate any game. That sort of thing is already done in these pages and elsewhere. Instead, we ask that you merely list the three (or less) games which you've spent the most time with *since* you received your last issue of *THE GENERAL*. With this we can generate a consensus list of what's being *played* . . . not just what is being bought. The degree of correlation between the Best Selling Lists and the Most Played List should prove interesting.

Feel free to list any game regardless of manufacturer. There will be a built-in Avalon Hill bias to the survey because you all play Avalon Hill games to some extent but it should be no more prevalent than similar projects undertaken by other magazines with a special interest-based circulation. The amount to which this bias affects the final outcome will be left to the individual's discretion.

The games I've spent the most time playing during the past two months are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

NAVAL WAR \$6.00

AH's Card Game of World War II
Naval Combat

INSTRUCTIONS:

Rate each category by placing a number ranging from 1 through 9 in the appropriate space to the right (1 equating "excellent"; 5, "average"; 9, "terrible"). EXCEPTION: Rate items 7a and 7b in terms of minutes necessary to play the game, in ten-minute increments. (Example: If you've found it takes two and a half hours to play the basic scenario of *FRANCE 1940*, enter "15" for category 7a.) For an explanation of the categories, refer to the AH Philosophy of Vol. 19, No. 4. Sub-categories are indicated by italics. Enter ratings only for those categories relevant to the game in question. Note that AH's ratings for Complexity and Year of Publishing have been provided; do not rate these categories.

1. Overall Value
2. Components
- 2a. Mapboard
- 2b. Counters
- 2c. Player's Aids
3. Complexity
- 3a. Complexity
4. Completeness of Rules
5. Playability
- 5a. Excitement Level
- 5b. Play Balance
6. Authenticity
7. Game Length
- 7a. Basic/Shortest
- 7b. Advanced/Longest
8. Year of Publication

1983

\$1.00

Good for Postage Charges Only on Complete Game Purchases

This coupon is valid only for mail order purchases of complete games direct from Avalon Hill. Each postage coupon entered does not exceed the total postage charge for that order. Coupons are not usable for parts, magazines, or plain kit orders. Shipping charges are 10% of the dollar amount of your order if sent to a USA address. Shipping costs to Canada and Mexico are 20% of the order; overseas orders must add 30%. Any past *GENERAL* postage coupons previously offering different values may be used as the equal of this coupon.

Example: Customer A lives in the USA and orders a \$15 game. His postage charge is \$1.50 which he may pay by sending in 2 postage coupons and \$15, or 1 postage coupon and \$15.50. Customer B lives in Canada and orders the same game. He must pay \$15 in USA funds plus 3 postage coupons or \$15 plus \$1 for each postage coupon less than 3 which he sends.

Opponent Wanted

50¢

1. Want-ads will be accepted only when printed on this form or a facsimile and must be accompanied by a 50¢ token fee. No refunds. Payment may be made in uncanceled U.S. postage stamps.
2. For Sale, Trade, or Wanted To Buy ads will be accepted only when dealing with collector's items (out of print AH games) and are accompanied by a \$1.00 token fee. No refunds.
3. Insert copy on lines provided (25 words maximum) and print name, address, and phone number on the appropriate lines.
4. Please PRINT. If your ad is illegible, it will not be printed.
5. So that as many ads as possible can be printed within our limited space, we request that you use official state and game abbreviations. Don't list your entire collection, list only those you are most interested in locating opponents for.

Afrika Korps—AK, Air Force—AF, Alexander—AL, Alpha Omega—AO, Amoeba Wars—AW, Anzio—AZ, Arab-Israeli Wars—AIW, Assault On Crete—AOC, Bismarck—BIS, Blitzkrieg—BL, Battle Of The Bulge—BB, Bull Run—BR, Caesar Alesia—CAE, Caesar's Legions—CL, Chancellorsville—CH, Circus Maximus—CM, Civilization—CIV, Conquistador—CON, Cross Of Iron—COI, Crescendo Of Doom—COD, Dauntless—DL, D-Day—DD, Diplomacy—DIP, Down With The King—DWTK, Dragonhunt—DH, Flat Top—FT, Fortress Europa—FE, France 40—FR, Frederick the Great—FRED, Freedom in the Galaxy—FG, Fury In The West—FITW, Gettysburg—GE, G.I.: Anvil of Victory—GI, Gladiator—GL, Guns Of August—GOA, Gunslinger—GSL, Jutland—JU, Kingmaker—KM, Legend of Robin Hood—LRH, The Longest Day—TLD, Little Round Top—LRT, Luftwaffe—LW, Machiavelli—MA, Magic Realm—MR, Midway—MD, Napoleon—NP, Napoleon at Bay—NAB, Origins—OR, Outdoor Survival—OS, PanzerArme Afrika—PAA, Panzerblitz—PB, Panzer Gruppe Guderian—PGG, Panzerkrieg—PK, Panzer Leader—PL, Rail Baron—RB, Richthofen's War—RW, The Russian Campaign—TRC, Squad Leader—SL, Stalingrad—STAL, Starship Troopers—SST, Storm Over Arnhem—SOA, Struggle of Nations—SON, Submarine—SUB, Tactics II—TAC, Third Reich—3R, Titan—TT, Tobruk—TB, Trireme—TR, Up Front—UF, Victory In The Pacific—VITP, War and Peace—W&P, War At Sea—WAS, Waterloo—WAT, Wizard's Quest—WQ, Wooden Ships & Iron Men—WSIM.

CONTEST #119

To enter the contest, check the box indicating the most likely outcome, write out your complete turn in the space provided, indicating all attacks and/or movement. Rate the three top articles in this issue by the usual procedure.

American Victory Draw German Victory

Play

Action: Card: Group:

Action: Card: Group:

Action: Card: Group:

Discard

Card:

Card:

Issue as a whole . . . (Rate from 1 to 10, with 1 equating excellent, 10 equating terrible)
Best 3 Articles

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

VICTORY

INSIDER



HELL'S HIGHWAY

Holland, 1944

Operation Market Garden

Victory Games Inc.

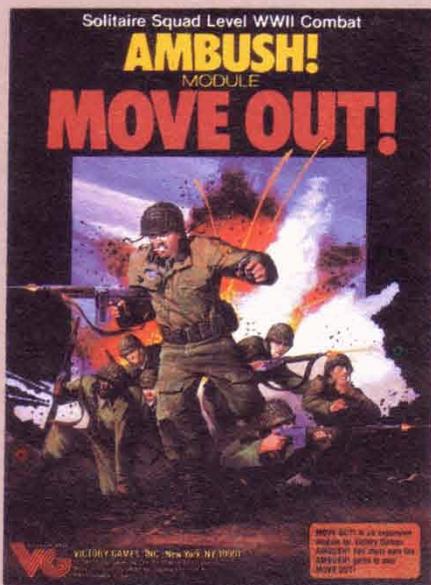


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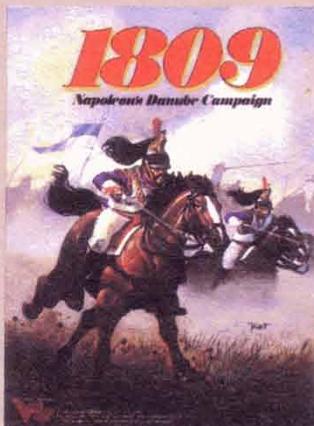


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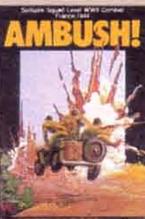
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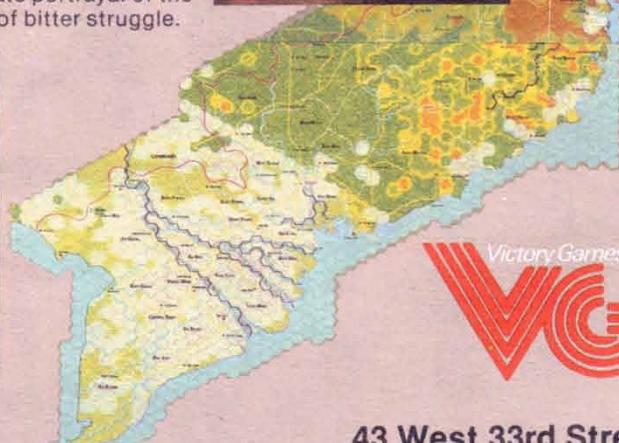
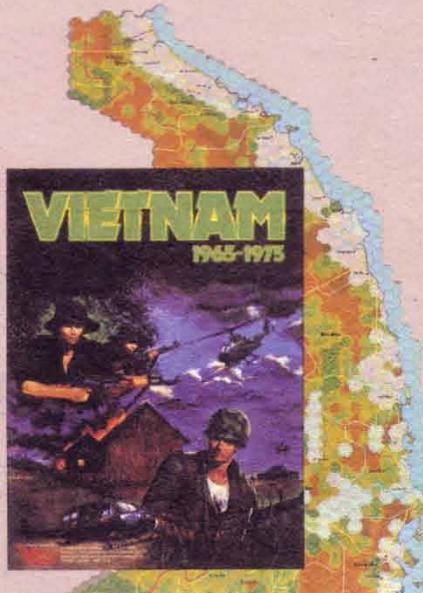
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thrilling TALES OF VICTORY

'NATO: The Next War in Europe' Big Success at NGAP 83-84

The finals of the American Wargaming Association's fourth annual Northeast Gaming Association Playoffs were hosted by the Connecticut Games Club on February 11, 1984.

The event was co-sponsored by Victory Games. Teams representing wargaming clubs from all over the northeastern U.S. competed. Victory Games' *NATO: The Next War in Europe* was played as a unique experiment — to try a new game that could not yet have been mastered by anyone.

The experiment was quite successful. *NATO: The Next War in Europe* provided play that was intense, exciting, and incredibly balanced. In the semi-finals, the University of Massachusetts defeated the West Point Wargames Committee with a marginal victory. Their capture of West Berlin by the Warsaw Pact countries became the deciding factor in that game. Then, the University went on to beat the Central Connecticut Wargaming Association in the closest final in the NGAP's four-year history.

The University of Massachusetts Strategy Games Club took first place in the competition; Central Connecticut Wargaming Association took second; West Point Wargames Committee finished third. Fourth, fifth and sixth places were won by the Southeastern Massachusetts Gamers Association, Connecticut Game Club, and Sugar Hollow (Danbury) Wargamers. The Stamford Wargamers, Mercer Adventure Gamers, and The Pioneer Valley Military Strategists took seventh, eighth, and ninth places. Mark Horan, who played for University of Massachusetts, received the most valuable player award. First prize: a copy of *NATO*.



Mark Horan (l) is awarded the MVP award — and a copy of *NATO* — by Commissioner Jeff Cornett at the NGA Playoffs.

Victory Games congratulates all of the competitors at the Northeast Gaming Association, and we hope to see all of you again next year.

Unabashed plug department: people interested in more information about the American Wargaming Association and its tournaments should contact Jeff Cornett; 11 Robert Frost Dr.; Shelton, CT 06484.

— Paul Murphy



Victory Insider is devoted to printing articles about the products of Victory Games, Inc.

All editorial and general mail should be sent to The Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214. Subscriptions to *The General* are \$12.00 for one year; \$18.00 for two years. Address changes must be submitted at least 6 weeks in advance to guarantee proper delivery. Paid advertising is not accepted.

Articles from the public will be considered for publication at the discretion of our Executive Editor. Articles should be typewritten, double-spaced, and written in English. There is no limit to word length. Rejected articles will be returned if submitted with a stamped-self addressed envelope.

It had to happen some time, but it sure doesn't feel good when it does. Errors crept into the first issue of the *Insider* that should be resolved.

First, the author of the *Gulf Strike* article was none other than Mark Herman, noted game designer, and Executive Editor of the *Insider*.

Second, the artist who drew the front cover was Charlie Kibler, from the Avalon Hill Art Department. These two gave body and image to the *Insider*. Without them, we would have been sound and fury, with two pages of ads and blather by the M.E., and where would that leave us?

— W. Bill

Executive Editor: Mark Herman
Managing Editor: William E. Peschel
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Mark Herman, Jerry Glichenhouse, Rosaria Baldari, Robert Kern, Gerry Klug, Susan Koch, Ted Koller, Michael E. Moore, Paul Murphy, Bob Ryer, Eric Lee Smith, Jim Talbot.

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RED DEVILS AND IRISH GUARDS

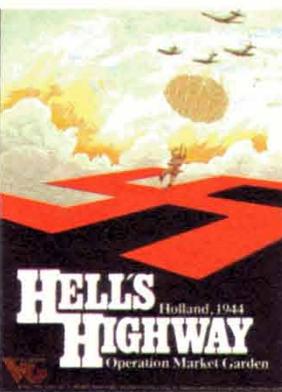
Allied Strategy in Hell's Highway

By John H. Butterfield

The historical campaign game of *Hell's Highway* can be a frustrating experience for an Allied player who begins the battle on the wrong foot. The extremities of the battlefield are the key — the Meuse l'Escaut Canal bridgehead, held by the Irish Guards of XXX Corps; and the Neder Rijn crossing at Arnhem by the 1st Airborne Division. As the Allied player, you must deploy and move the British units in these areas with chess-like precision on Turn 1.

XXX CORPS: Outflank and Penetrate!

The powerful forces of XXX Corps face their toughest opposition during the opening turns of the game, between the bridgehead and Eindhoven. Your objective is simple: move north on the highway at all costs. Unfortunately, this maneuver also simplifies the German Player's objective: block the highway at every opportunity. Therefore, you must attack the German forces with such efficiency and power on Turns 1 and 2 that you destroy his entire front before he can mobilize — an undertaking that is more easily formulated than accomplished. Here is a plan that usually works.



Initial Deployment: As stated in the rules, you must place five units of the Irish Guards in the bridgehead. You may then place any of the twelve other XXX Corps units available on Turn 1 that will fit in the bridgehead. See the deployment plan in *Figure 1*. Note that the two armor units on the highway should be in Travel Mode. Five units available on Turn 1 are not placed in the bridgehead; three of them will enter as reinforcements, as described below.

Airstrikes: The outcome of XXX Corps operations on the first two turns is largely determined by the success of your initial airstrikes. Remember, a successful airstrike on Turn 1 will disrupt the target until the German player-turn of *Turn 2*. While it's heartwarming to eliminate a unit, disrupting it is sufficient since the unit will exert no control, cannot fire, and can be bypassed, allowing your units to attack other German forces further behind the front line.

Use all six of your available air points to conduct airstrikes against German units in the following hexes (the total modifier to each airstrike die roll is listed in parentheses): 0109(+1), 0211(+2), 0215(+3), 0313(+1), 0513(0), 0713(-1).

First Moves and Attacks: Let us assume you rolled a "3" (unmodified) for each of your airstrikes, an average result slightly in the German's favor. This would disrupt the units in hexes 0109, 0211, 0215, and 0313. You would then move your units and bring in the three reinforcements also. Note that your Guards headquarters moves to a location from which it can lend combat engineer support to many different attacks. After completing the moves, conduct the following three attacks:

Attack 1 against 0513: Four units attack with engineer support. The British units in hexes 0512 and 0514 use indirect fire so they are not subject to defensive fire and their control will isolate the German unit at the moment of offensive fire. The other two units conduct direct fire. Even if German defensive fire disrupts the strongest unit, offensive fire will still be resolved on the "21+" column of the Fire Table with a "+6" die modifier (+4 for broken terrain, entrenchments negated, +2 for German isolation). Any offensive fire result eliminates the German unit.

Attack 2 against 0211: Three units attack with engineer support. All units use direct fire. The defender cannot conduct defensive fire because he is disrupted. Any offensive fire result eliminates the German unit.

Attack 3 against 0313: Four units attack with engineer support. All units use direct fire. The disrupted defender cannot fire. Any offensive fire result eliminates the German unit. Use exploitation movement to advance the two armor units in Travel Mode to hexes 0513 and 0412.

Alternate Moves and Attacks: Assuming you had bad luck and rolled a "2" (unmodified) on each of your airstrikes, disrupting only the German units in hexes 0211 and 0215, you would then move your units and conduct the following four attacks:

Attack 1 against 0211: Three units attack with engineer support. All units use direct fire. The disrupted defender cannot fire. Any offensive fire result eliminates the German unit.

Attack 2 against 0513: Two units attack using *indirect* fire. The purpose of this attack is merely to pin the German unit. The offensive fire is resolved on the "16-18" column of the Fire Table with a "0" die modifier (defender entrenched in broken terrain). There is a 1/6 chance that the German unit will lose one step at no risk to the British units.

Attack 3 against 0313: Three units attack with engineer support. All units use direct fire. The disrupted defender cannot fire.

Figure 1: XXX Corps Deployment



‘YOUR OBJECTIVE (WITH XXX CORPS) IS SIMPLE: MOVE NORTH ON THE HIGHWAY AT ALL COSTS. THIS SIMPLIFIES THE GERMAN PLAYER’S OBJECTIVE: BLOCK THE HIGHWAY AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY. THEREFORE, YOU MUST ATTACK WITH SUCH EFFICIENCY AND POWER THAT YOU DESTROY HIS ENTIRE FRONT BEFORE HE CAN MOBILIZE.’



Any offensive fire result eliminates the German unit. Use exploitation movement to advance the two armor units in Travel Mode to hexes 0313 and 0212 (if the German unit in 0513 is disrupted in Attack 2, advance the units to 0412 and 0313).

Attack 4 against 0215: Two units attack without engineer support. Both units use direct fire. The disrupted defender cannot fire. This attack is not critical but it will probably cause the German unit to lose a step at no risk to the attackers.

Turn Two: Swarm ahead with your infantry units, attacking and outflanking any units that the German player does not move out of your path. Attack German units to the side of the road only if they threaten the road itself. You will have plenty of units entering the map later on to mop up stragglers. Bring in the two Turn 1 reinforcement units that were not able to enter earlier, and bring in two motorized infantry units and two armored recon units eligible to enter this turn. Continue east until you reach Arnhem.

THE FIRST AIRBORNE DIVISION: Hold that bridge!

Your objective as commander of the “Red Devils” is to get

units into Arnhem and delay co-ordinated attacks by the German player against the bridge defenders for as long as possible. Once the 2nd SS Panzer Corps is on the battlefield and organized, a slow, methodical elimination of your bridge defenders is assured. Given poor Allied play, the Germans will start pounding on the British in hex 7917 on Turn 3. On the other hand, with an effective British deployment, the Germans will not be able to mount powerful attacks against you until Turn 5 and will not be able to assault the paratroopers in hex 7917 until Turn 7 or 8.

Initial Airlandings: Proper play of the Red Devils begins with the drop zone assignments. *Figure 3* shows the best drop hex assignments for the units available on Turn 1. The bottom unit in each stack is generally more important than the top unit on Turn 1 and should check for disruption first; because the unit in each stack that checks for disruption second has a slightly higher chance of disrupting with a step loss.

Note that although hex 8010 can be used for airlanding, you should not place units there, because the airlanding die roll would be adversely affected by the German unit in hex 8011.

Initial Moves: After completing the Airlanding Procedure,

move those units that are not disrupted. The following unit-by-unit summary assumes that no British units were disrupted. Of course, the chance of that happening is very small. The summary explains the reason for the move and offers alternative moves for each unit if other units are disrupted.

(1/1P/1) in hex 7709: Enter Travel Mode and move towards Arnhem as shown, regardless of what other units disrupted. Move to hex 7917 or 2017 in Combat Mode on Turn 2.

(1, recon) in hex 7709: Remain in this hex so that the other unit can fulfill its orders, regardless of what other units are disrupted.

(3/1P/1) in hex 7807: Move to hex 7810 so the unit can enter Travel Mode on Turn 2 and move towards Arnhem behind the faster motorized recon units. However, if the German 16SS unit cannot be attacked with at least 3 units on Turn 1, move to hex 8010 to aid the attack instead (using indirect fire).

(1, HQ) in hex 7807: Move to hex 8009 to give combat engineer support to the attack against the 16SS unit, regardless of other units disrupting.

(1, recon) in hex 7808: Move to hex 7608 so that the unit can enter Travel Mode on Turn 2 and move to Arnhem, regardless of other units disrupting.

(1/GP/1) in hex 7808: Move to hilltop hex 7811 so that, if the 16SS unit survives the Turn 1 attack, that unit can surround the enemy on Turn 2. However, if *1/1P/1* or *2/1P/1* is disrupted, enter Travel Mode and move along the Doorwerth-Arnhem minor road instead.

(2/1P/1) in hex 7809: Enter Travel Mode and move towards Arnhem as shown, regardless of other units disrupting. If *1/1P/1* is disrupted, move one hex further to 7812. Move into Arnhem on Turn 2.

(1, artillery) in hex 7809: Support the attack against the 16SS unit by conducting indirect fire. Do the same on Turn 2, if necessary.

(Ksb/1A/1 & Ksb/1A/1) in hex 7909: Both units move to hex 7911 to attack the 16SS unit with direct fire. However, if fewer than two units are able to enter Travel Mode and move along the Doorwerth-Arnhem minor road, one of these two units should enter Travel Mode and move along the road via Heelsum.

(1B/1A/1, H) in hex 8009: Move to hex 8010 to attack the 16SS unit with indirect fire, regardless of other units disrupting.

(1B/1A/1, w/o H) in hex 8009: Move to hex 8210 so that the unit can take advantage of many movement options on Turn 2, including entering Travel Mode and marching to Schaarsbergen if the Allied player feels daring! However, if the 16SS unit cannot be attacked with at least 4 units on Turn 1, move to hex 7911 or 8111 to attack the enemy with direct fire instead.

(2ss/1A/1 & 2/GP/1) in hex 8109: Move to hex 8111 to attack the 16SS unit with direct fire, regardless of other units disrupting.

Considerations for Turn 2

Western Flank: After the 16SS unit is dealt with, a few glider units should head west to set up a line in the hills and to defend the 4th Parachute Brigade's drop zone.

Secondary Bridges: British units will pass the Driel ferry and a non-road bridge as they move along the Doorwerth-Arnhem road. The German player will almost certainly destroy these crossings. If he does not, you have a golden opportunity to grab the south end of Arnhem bridge. Later, however, the intact crossing will become an additional avenue of attack for the German player that you will have to defend.

Arnhem Flank: If you are able to move a strong unit into hex 7917 in Combat Mode on Turn 2, consider attacking the heavy flak unit across the river. Although the flak unit poses no direct threat to you, clearing it from the hex will give you the option to grab the south end of the bridge early.

Turn 3 and After

Set up a defensive perimeter anchored on the Neder Rijn so that the units of the 1st Airborne can give each other mutual support for as long as possible. Fall back to shrink the perimeter only when necessary to preserve units. The extent of this perimeter depends on your fortunes on Turns 1 & 2. *Figure 4* shows the general size of a good starting perimeter and how your lines should fall back as the game progresses.

Forward Perimeter: Given a reasonable airlanding, you should be able to set up this line by Turn 3. If the airlandings go well, actions shown by the arrows in *Figure 4* should also be undertaken. If you get very lucky and eliminate the 16SS unit on Turn 1, you should be able to extend your perimeter to control all the woods between Oosterbeek and Schaarsbergen.

Primary Perimeter: Fall back to this line around Turn 6. If the initial airlandings go poorly, this line may have to serve as the forward perimeter. However, you must guard the drop zone of the 4th Parachute Brigade until their airlanding is completed.

Secondary Perimeter: When the Germans really start to squeeze, around Turn 9, fall back to this line, even if there is still an isolated British unit in hex 7917 (Arnhem bridge).

Final Perimeter: If you've only got half a dozen units left, fall back to this line and keep a lookout for the XXX Corps!

Figure 2: First Airborne Division Deployment

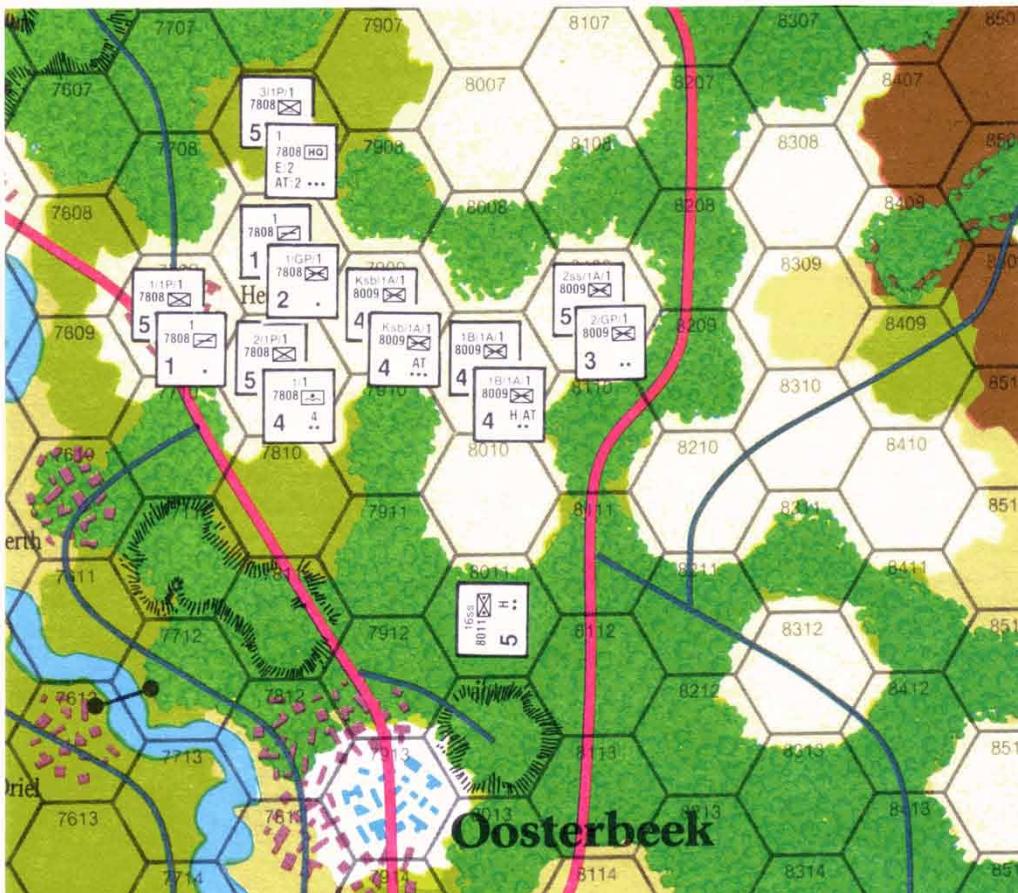


Figure 3: First Airborne Division
Defensive Perimeters

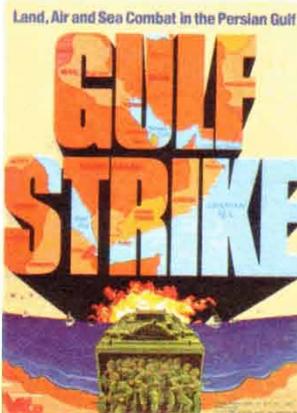


THE IRANIAN CIVIL WAR

A New Scenario For Gulf Strike

By Mark Herman

In 1984, the Ayatollah Khomeini dies in Qom. A mullah successor Ayatollah Ban Ghani takes power. The war with Iraq continues. Left wing elements (including surviving Tudeh party cells) are ruthlessly suppressed. This bloodshed coalesces the moderates in the south to



react leading to a state of total anarchy in the country. At this point the army mutinies. A new Iranian Nationalist movement forms in Khuzistan around the son of the shah, promising democracy, not monarchy and a revitalization of the country. The revolt began in Megahex F-06 and quickly spread to G-07 and G-08 bringing the navy and the majority of the air force into the revolt. A cease fire is declared with Iraq by the Nationalist forces temporarily ending the conflict in that sector. The Tehran government starts an offensive to put down the revolt but it becomes bogged down in

the mountains around Esfahan. An uprising in the city of Shiraz overthrows the government administration and welcomes the Nationalist forces who are continuing to be successful in the mountains. A limited Nationalist offensive along the coast is successful and culminates in the capture of Bandar Abbas (Nationalist forces control Megahexes F-06, G-07, G-08, H-07, H-08, and J-08). The Tehran government in the north is thrown in total disarray by this success.

In this environment of anarchy the Kurds increase their activities (Megahexes F-05 and E-05) while a republic of Baluchistan is declared (Megahexes L-08, L-09, and M-08).

In June of 1985 the city of Tabriz rises in revolt lead by a left wing party calling itself the "Party for National Reconciliation". They invite the USSR to enter the country and restore order. On June 20, 1985 the Soviet forces roll over the Iranian border calling on all forces to lay down their arms. Iraq declares an indefinite cease fire and adopts a neutral posture.

GAME LENGTH

"The Iranian Civil War" can be played to completion in 45 hours. The game ends at the conclusion of Game-Turn 30.

MAPS

Use Operational Maps A, B, and C and the Strategic Map.

PLAYERS

Player A begins the game as the Initiative player and controls the USSR forces. Player B begins the game as the Reaction player and controls the US, Iranian Nationalist, and Governmental forces. A multi-player game could have the Government, US, and Nationalist forces played by different participants.

POLITICAL RULES

Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, and UAE are neutral and do not set up their forces except their air units. No ground forces may enter these countries. US air units may fly over the territories of these countries freely whereas all Iranian and USSR air units are intercepted and attacked, if possible. Each Unit Assignment Stage, all air units are placed in Intercept mode. The interceptions are handled by the U.S. player on a case by case basis. These sorties do not expend Supply Points. All other rules are in effect the airbases and air units may be attacked.

SPECIAL RULES

(1) US forces may not enter non-Iranian Nationalist Megahexes until they are attacked by USSR forces. If USSR units enter Nationalist Iranian controlled Megahexes the US may attack and intercept freely. Once either of these conditions occurs the US movement restriction is permanently lifted for the remainder of the scenario.

(2) US forces may stack with Iranian Nationalist forces but with no others.

(3) All Gulf Council countries except Oman are neutral. Omani forces will not attack unless their airspace or units are attacked but US forces only may use their facilities. US units only may use any Omani strategic or operational hexes without restriction.

(4) All Gulf Council countries except Oman although neutral will allow US air force units to fly over their territory freely. USSR overflights will trigger interceptions. Place these air forces on the map (if necessary).

(5) Nationalist forces must keep at least 3x Brigades of combat forces in Megahex F-06 at all times. Failure to comply reduces the supply point reinforcements each Game Turn the condition is not fulfilled by one third (round down). The Brigades may have any number of hits.

(6) Seven Game-Turns after US intervention, Nationalist forces may form Division size units with the armor and mechanized units. Prior to this they may not form Division sized units. All the rules for Breakdown and Recombination apply. In addition 5x F-4 air units are received at a Nationalist controlled airbase, if none are available these air reinforcements are lost permanently.

(7) Nationalist air units can be launched for interception through a US E-2 or AWAC EWDA unit.

(8) Iranian government units will attack "anyone" who enters one of their initially controlled Megahexes.

(9) Although the Iranian government forces are controlled by the US/Iranian Nationalist force player they may not leave one of their initially controlled Megahex areas unless forced by retreat or other combat conditions. They must attempt to reenter their controlled Megahexes as soon as possible. Whenever an Iranian government unit is in anyones ZOC they will attack if possible. If a choice is available roll the die to see which units are attacked.

(10) Whenever a non-USSR unit enters a Kurdish controlled Megahex (F-05, E-05 on the Iranian side of the border) except units that begin in Kermanshah (1023), Hamadan (1622) and Arak (1926), they are attacked. Units that begin in the specified cities are only attacked if they leave the cities in which case they are treated as if they had just entered the Megahex. Additionally any non-Soviet units that enter Baluchistan (Megahexes L-08, L-09, and M-08) are effected in the same fashion. Although the Kurds and Baluchs do not have any combat units on the map their forces have the following capabilities: movement costs for non-USSR units in these Megahexes are doubled (note that certain formations will prohibit movement). In addition, each time a unit initially enters these Megahexes (full or partial) they are attacked using the following table. Once having entered a Kurdish or Baluchi Megahex the unit is not attacked again unless it first leaves then reenters the same

Megahex. Moving from one Kurdish/Baluchi Megahex directly into the other elicits another entry attack.

Kurdish/Baluchi Attrition Table

When to Use: Each time a non-Soviet unit enters a Kurdish/Baluchi controlled Megahex.

Type of Unit	Die Roll
Armored	1
Infantry	2
Support/Truck	4
and Other	

Explanation: If the die roll is equal to or less than the indicated die roll for the appropriate unit type the unit takes one hit. A unit can be eliminated in this manner.

(11) The Kurds never surrender and the effect of special rule 10 lasts for the entire scenario.

(12) The Baluchis can be defeated neutralizing the effect of rule 10. The Baluchis can be defeated in the following manner. On any turn after Game-Turn 3 that a Random Political event occurs the Pakistan forces are automatically activated (See Scenario 1, 46-L, Special Pakistan Rule). If no Soviet ground units are present in Baluchistan and a Pakistani unit enters operational hex 6162 while at least one Pakistani/or other US controlled unit occupies each of the other Megahexes the Baluchis are defeated and all effects of Special Rule 10 are ended for the remainder of the scenario. If a Soviet ground unit is present this cannot occur. All Soviet units in this case would first have to be ejected before the Baluchis could be defeated.

(13) Automatic Random Events on Game Turns 1, 2 and 3.

SUPPLY POINTS

Initial Supply Point Levels: USSR (150), Iranian Government (70), Iranian Nationalist (80), US (40).

On all Game-Turns following Game Turn 1, each country receives the indicated number of Supply Points during the Global Military Stage: USSR (60), Iranian Government (15), Iranian Nationalist (25), US (30, provided the US Supply Head is not subjected to any form of combat during the previous Game-Turn).

VICTORY CONDITIONS: Identical to Scenario 2.

The Iranian Civil War

Orders of Battle (Units are listed in the order that they set up)

USSR

Identical to Scenario 2 with the addition that the 7th Army units may

also set up in any Operational hex within Megahex F-03.

US

Identical to Scenarios 1, 2, and 3 with US activation on Game Turn 1.

Iranian Nationalist Forces

Initial Areas of Control:

Megahexes F-06, G-07, G-08, H-07, H-08, J-08, K-08.

Placement of Forces: Forces may be placed in any full operational hex within an area of control plus any hex in Megahex G-06 within 5 hexes of Dezful (1431) or 2 hexes of Bourujen (2535).

Army

1st Division (in Brigades — one hit each) Armored
 2nd Division (in Brigades — one hit each) Armored
 3rd Division (in Brigades — one hit each) Mechanized
 4th Division (in Brigades — one hit each) Armored
 5th Division (in Brigades — one hit each) Armored
 6th Division (in Brigades — one hit each) Mechanized
 7th Division (in div. or Brigade 3 hits division or 1 per Brigade) infantry
 8th Division (in div. or Brigade 3 hits division or 1 per Brigade) infantry
 9th Brigade (one hit) infantry
 10th Brigade (one hit) infantry
 11th Brigade (half strength side-no hits) armored
 1x Marine Battalion
 1x Airmobile Brigade (one hit)
 2x Artillery Brigade (no hits)
 3x Headquarters (no hits)
 3x Air Defense Brigade (no hits)
 4x Truck
 Air Force
 4x Airbase (Bandar Abbas, Shiraz, Busheir, and Dezful)
 3x F-4
 1x F-14 EWDA
 2x F-5
 1x AH1
 1x CH-47
 1x C-130
 1x SH-3

Navy

1x DD
 1x FAC
 1x Amph
 1x FF



Iranian Government**Initial Areas of Control**

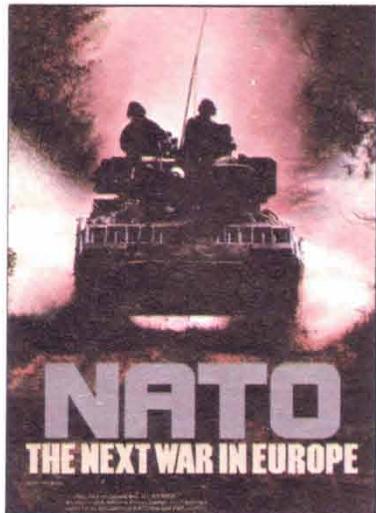
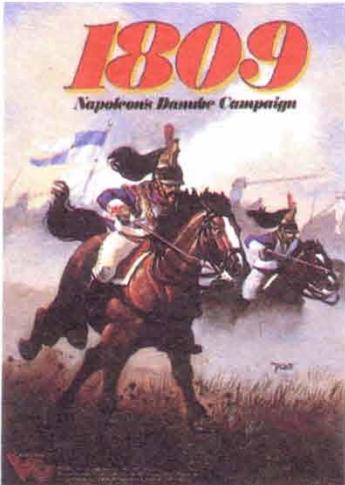
All Megahexes in Iran not controlled by Iranian National forces, Kurdish (See Special Rule 10), Baluchi (See Special Rule 10), and Megahex F-03. Units that set up in Megahex G-06 may only deploy in city hexes.

Army

17x Militia Infantry Division (no hits)
 16x Militia Infantry Brigade (no hits)
 1x Artillery Brigade (no hits)
 1x Air Defense Brigade (no movement allowance—in Tehran—no hits)
 1x Headquarters
 4x Trucks

Air Force

2x Airbase (Both in Tehran)
 1x F-4
 2x F-5
 1x CH-47

Navy-None**Inside Insider #3:****SARGE SEZ . . .****WRITE!**

"TenSHUN! The Lieutenant's asked me to say that we're looking for volunteers to fill the ranks of the *Victory Insider*. This mission requires split-second timing, in-depth knowledge of the latest games from Victory, and a willingness to get the job done.

"The Lieutenant also says that this job will pay the same rates as *The General*. That's \$18 per magazine page, \$27 per page if you want AH or VG products.

"So who's volunteering? Moore! Ryer! Koller! Herman! Report to the Lieutenant at 0300 hours in full field pack and typewriter. On the double!"

"DISMISSED!"

VIETNAM

New from Victory Games for Spring 1984!

This comprehensive multi-scenario simulation covers the conflict in all its aspects from 1965 on, with particular emphasis on operations and political control throughout the provinces. This innovative, highly detailed system features a range of scenarios that can be played in as little as three hours or for days on end. The use of battalion level units, airmobile operations, air strikes, naval gunfire, Viet Cong hidden movement, and free fire zones all contribute to the game's accurate portrayal of the years of bitter struggle.

Components: Rules booklet, two 22" x 32" full-color mapsheets depicting all of South Vietnam and adjoining areas of Laos and Cambodia, 780 die-cut cardboard playing pieces representing all major belligerents, one six-sided die, and plastic counter storage tray.

Complexity: Very high. **Solitaire Suitability:** Medium. **Time Scale:** Two turns per Season. **Map Scale:** Six miles per hex.

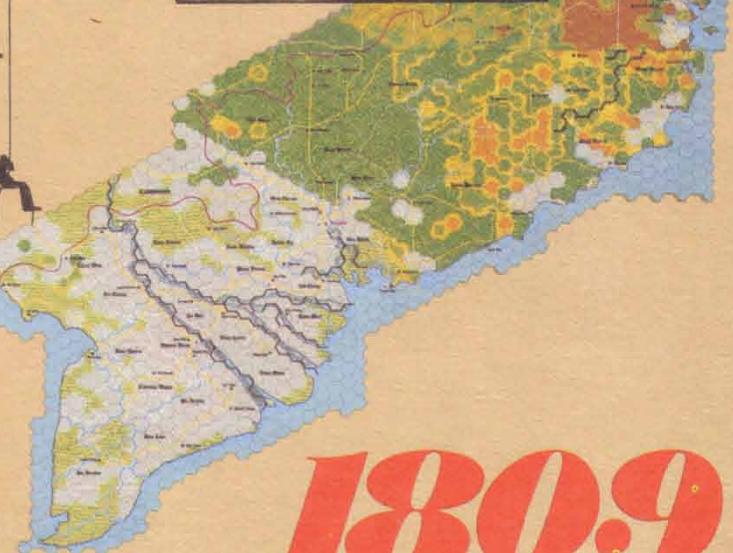
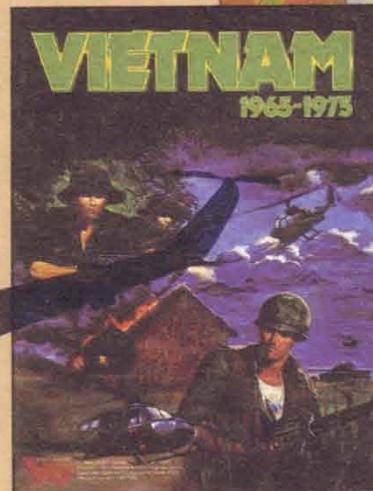
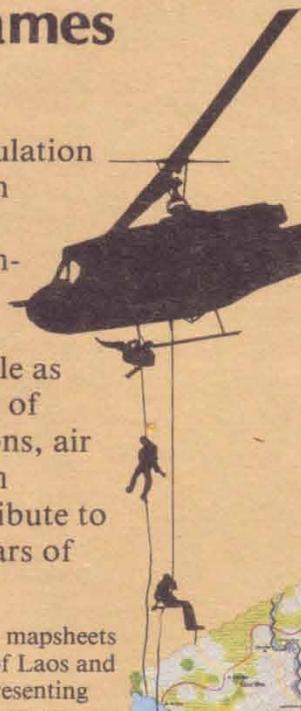
Unit Scale: Division/regiment/battalion. **Players:** Two.

Playing Time: From 6 hours for a short scenario, to a hundred or more hours for an entire campaign.

#30005

VIETNAM

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1809

Napoleon's Danube Campaign

An exciting subject, a sophisticated design, and an exceptionally easy to learn set of rules — 1809 is a masterpiece of Napoleonic gaming. Trace the entire campaign, from Ratisbon to Wagram, or enjoy the challenge of the Essling and Wagram battle scenarios. The game includes extensive rules for leadership, command, bridging, march, and combat, as well as optional rules for hidden deployment, combat effectiveness, and fatigue.

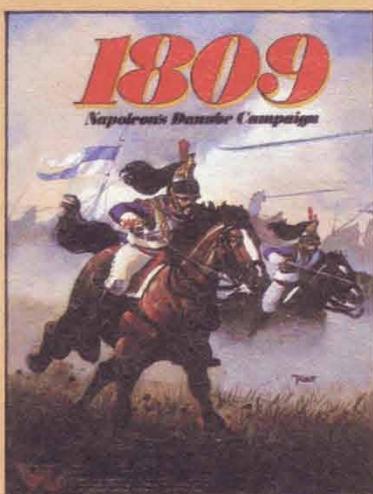
Components: Rules booklet, two 22" x 32" and one 22" x 16" full-color mapsheets, two organization displays, 260 die-cut cardboard playing pieces representing leaders and combat units, one six-sided die, and plastic storage tray.

Complexity: Medium. **Solitaire Suitability:** High. **Time Scale:** Two days per turn. **Map Scale:** Three miles per hex. **Unit Scale:** Division/brigade. **Players:** Two. **Playing Time:** From 3 hours for a short scenario, to 20 or more hours for an entire campaign.

#30006

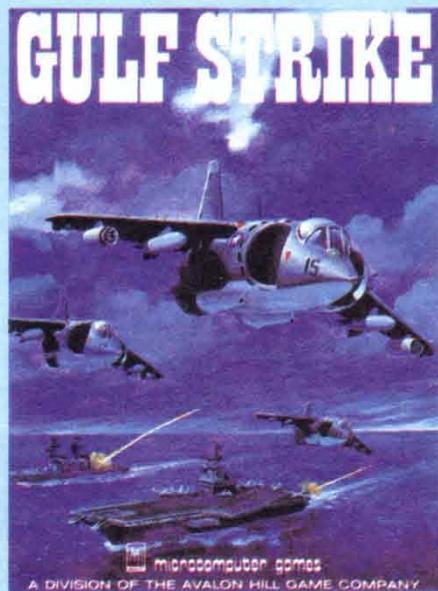
1809

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